Visitor arrivals up 148% in August 2023. PAGE 2

LB fiscal analyst says Norita's report on $10.1M deficit is wrong. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 187

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

www.saipantribune.com

www.facebook.com/saipantribune

DANGEROUS POTHOLE FERDIE DE LA TORRE

A vehicle maneuvers to the left to avoid a big pothole in the middle of Texas Road near the corner of Delgadina St. as two students walk on the side of the road behind the Chalan Kanoa Cemetery yesterday afternoon. The big pothole poses a danger to motorists and passersby, especially whenever it rains and during nighttime.

Haze from Hawaii fires reaches Saipan

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The National Weather Service based off of Tiyan, Guam announced yesterday that haze from the Hawaii fires have reached Saipan and in response, the Office of the Governor in conjunction with CNMI Homeland Security have implemented a volcanic haze advisory.

Yesterday, the NWS shared that haze from the Hawaiian island fires have migrated to the CNMI and were reportedly seen across Saipan and parts of Rota.

"We have been receiving

See HAZE on Page 4

Conferees start tackling differences on budget bill

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Manglona

Yumul

The bicameral conference committee started yesterday their meeting with a goal to reach a mutually agreed budget bill for the CNMI government's operations for fiscal year 2024.

Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) chairs the Senate conference committee, while Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) chairs the House of Representatives conference committee.

The meeting will resume today, Wednesday, at 9:30am, in which the conferees are expected to address the provisions on holiday pay and the outside source that will pay for the 24 Tinian municipal employees.

Manglona told *Saipan Tri-*

See CONFEREES on Page 4

Review of $116M ARPA cash expenditures about 30% complete

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Citing limited staffing, Department of Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita said their review of $116 million in American Rescue Plan Act cash expenditures is 30%-40% complete so far.

Norita

Norita said at a press briefing on Friday that she looks forward to the additional resources that they will be getting because of federal assistance.

Last January, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios created the Department of Finance and Office of Management and

See REVIEW on Page 4

14 arrested for illegally trying to enter Guam

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

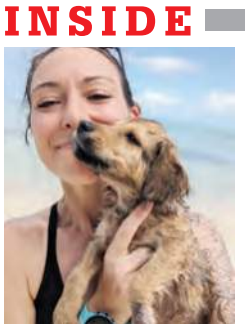
The United States Homeland Security Investigations recently arrested 14 Chinese nationals who were allegedly trying to enter Guam via boat illegally.

The HSI filed last week a complaint alleging that 14 Chinese nationals tried to enter Guam illegally via boat but were caught after paying an undercover HSI agent to transport them.

All 14 individuals are facing charges of engaging in a conspiracy to transport, move, or attempt to transport or move an alien within the United States in reckless disregard of the fact that the alien entered and remained in the United

See ARRESTED on Page 4

INSIDE



LOCAL

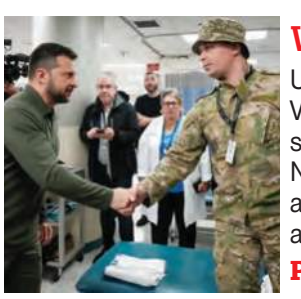
Lauren Cabrera, Saipan Humane Society founder and executive director, is hoping to fill the role of veterinarian in the region.

PAGE 5

BUSINESS

Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan staff provided a special lunch to the island's *man'amko* at the Office on Aging last Monday.

PAGE 11



WORLD

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy suggested that the United Nations needs to answer for allowing his country's invader a seat at the tables of power.

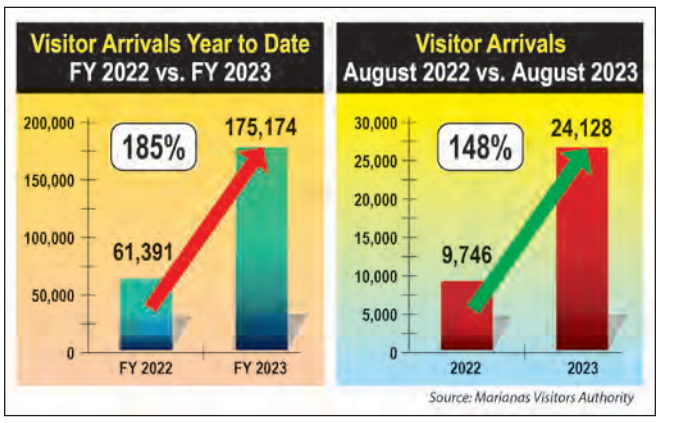
PAGE 13

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Visitor arrivals up 148% in August 2023



Arrivals to the CNMI grew 148% to 24,128 visitors in August 2023, compared to 9,746 visitors received in August 2022, according to the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Visitor arrivals from South Korea reached 20,319 compared to 8,111 in August last year. Strong demand in Korea had generated an abundance of air service to The Marianas by Jeju Air, T'Way, and Asiana Airline from Seoul and four weekly flights by Jeju Air from Busan through October.

So far, this fiscal year, visitors from South Korea comprise 82% of all arrivals to The Marianas and even higher during the summer peak month of August at 84%. Additionally, load factor—or the number of air seats sold compared to the number available—has averaged over 82% on all flights. However, Asiana Airlines and Jeju Air (Busan) have announced a reduction in air seats beginning in on Oct. 29, with Asiana suspending its four weekly flights through Dec. 19, 2023.

The Marianas received 960 visitors from Japan in August 2023 compared to 148 visitors in August 2022. In its marketing efforts, the MVA continues to face the obstacles of a strong U.S. dollar and a Japan national travel discount program that offers up to 20% discount to encourage domestic—rather than outbound—travel. Also, many Japanese are also still hesitant to travel due to fears of COVID, especially as a large percentage of Japanese children are not vaccinated.

China arrivals were at 1,055 compared to 31 arrivals in August 2022. Prior to the pandemic, China was one of the top source markets for The Marianas. Most visitors from China are FITs arriving via Seoul and Tokyo. The China National Tourism Administration reinstated The Marianas on its Approved Destination Status list in August, allowing package tours and charter flights to the destination once again. However, the number of flights allowed between China and U.S. is still extremely low, unless the U.S. Dept. of Transportation approves a separate number of flights allowed to The Marianas, as before the pandemic.

Overall, visitor arrivals to The Marianas have recovered 45% year-to-date compared to FY 2019 before the pandemic. In August The Marianas also received 861 visitors from Guam, 609 visitors from the United States, and a combined 324 visitors from all other markets. ***(PR)***

Big Dinner Box
No One Outp
Pizza Hut
NEWLY RENOVATED Pizza Hut
GUALO RAI COMMERCIAL CENTER
DELIVERY & CARRYOUT • SAIPAN (670) 235-9333
Limited time offer. Additional charge for more than 1 pizza topping, extra cheese, and bone-in wings (where available). No Substitutions. Products not exactly as shown.
A Saipan Favorite
1 TOPPING
$13.99
CARRYOUT DEAL
16" EXTRA LARGE
Classic NEW YORK Style PIZZA
LIMITED TIME OFFERS. Not available in some locations. Product availability, combinability of discounts and specials, delivery areas and charges may vary. Limited time only. Available at the participating Pizza Hut® Restaurant on Saipan. Products not exactly as shown. Delivery charges apply and do not include a gratuity. $15 minimum order for delivery. Limited delivery area. The Pizza Hut name, logos, and related marks are trademarks of Pizza Hut, LLC. © 2023 Pizza Hut, LLC
USE THIS COUPON AT SAIPAN PIZZA HUT ONLY
FREE LARGE 1-TOPPING PIZZA
With Purchase of a LARGE Pizza at Menu Price
Pizza Hut
COUPON EXPIRES 9/30/23. AVAILABLE AT SAIPAN PIZZA HUT ONLY. SEE RESTAURANT FOR DETAILS.
One coupon per person per purchase. Please mention coupon when ordering. Product not exactly as shown. Delivery charges apply and do not include a gratuity. $15 minimum order for delivery. Limited delivery area. The Pizza Hut name, logos, and related marks are trademarks of Pizza Hut, LLC. © 2023 Pizza Hut, LLC

Tinian Municipality wants King-Hinds re-appointed

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan, under the leadership of Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan, has written to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios to nominate Commonwealth Ports Authority chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds to serve another term on the board.

King-Hinds, among other board members, are set to run the course of their appointments this coming October, less than a month from now.

As a semi-autonomous agency in the CNMI, Palacios holds the power to appoint or re-appoint board members unto the CPA board.

Aldan, for his part, has written to Palacios nominating King-Hinds for reappointment as he wants her to continue to represent Tinian on the CPA board of directors.

"We have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Mrs. King-Hinds for a little over four years, both as fellow public servants and community members dedicated to the progress and development of our beloved CNMI. Throughout this time, we have witnessed her exceptional commitment, integrity, and dedication to advancing the welfare of our islands and its people," said Aldan.

Aldan expressed that King-Hinds brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the table having served as the chairman of the Commonwealth Ports Authority board for two consecutive terms.

"She possesses an intricate understanding of the complexities and challenges faced by our ports. Her profound knowledge of port operations, logistics, and industry regulations, coupled with her legal background are invaluable and will undoubtedly contribute to the effectiveness and progress of the Commonwealth Ports Authority in making informed decisions that align with the long-term growth and sustainability goals of the CNMI's ports," Aldan said.

In a statement from King-Hinds, she said she is grateful for the love and support of the Tinian leadership has shown her.

"I am grateful for the love and support that the Mayor and the Tinian leadership have given me over the years and I'm certainly appreciative of their continued confidence in my abilities to represent not just the people of Tinian but the entire CNMI. However, the appointment power lies with the governor as provided by the laws of the Commonwealth and it is his prerogative to appoint who he thinks will best represent his policy initiatives whether we like it or not," she said.

Although her position on the board remains uncertain come October, King-Hinds says she will still continue to serve the CNMI to the best of her abilities.

"With that being said, I'm going to keep doing me. I love the CNMI and I don't need a title to serve my community and will continue to do so because I've been raised to believe that service to your community is a moral obligation.

See TINIAN on Page 4

LB fiscal analyst says Norita's report on $10.1M deficit wrong

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Legislative Bureau fiscal analyst David S. Demapan said Monday contrary to Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita's report that the deficit in the general fund for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 was $10.1 million, based on his review of the same report, the deficit was $53.3 million.

"And that number comes from her report," said Demapan in an interview.

On Finance Fiscal Year 2023 Third Quarter Report, Norita clarified in her letter to the Legislature last week that a recent media article published a $68-million deficit in the general fund, however, the quarterly report indicated a budget deficit of $10.1 million.

Demapan shared his analysis of the $68-million deficit for the three quarters, or nine months of fiscal year of 2023, at a recent Senate session.

Demapan explained yesterday that the way he assembled that number is by taking the actual collection for the third quarter which amounts to $33,064,861.

The fiscal analyst said by adding all the expenditures, including the encumbrances, he came up with a total of $86,421,695.

He said taking the collection of $33,064,861 and subtract the $86,421,695 of total expenditures, it shows a deficit for the quarter of $53,356,834.

"And that's what happened to that report that I submitted to the Senate," said Demapan, adding that there is a need to have Norita explain how she came up with her number.

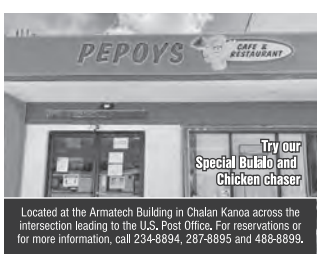
He pointed out that for the actual expenditures they have to consider also the encumbrances.

"Encumbrances are legal obligation of purchase orders. Then you have to subtract it also the expenditure to give you the true picture of what is the balance of the budget," he said.

In this case, Demapan said, the budget was overspent by approximately $53.3 million.

He said that the $53.3-mil-

See LB on Page 4



Located at the Armatech Building in Chalan Kanoa across the intersection leading to the U.S. Post Office. For reservations or for more information, call 234-8894, 287-8895 and 488-8899.

CHUSEOK 추석
THANKSGIVING WEEKEND
AT HYATT REGENCY
SAIPAN
September 30, 2023
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
KILI CAFÉ & TERRACE CHUSEOK SPECIAL
SATURDAY MARIANAS BARBECUE & GRILL
features Korean barbecue corner
$55 per person
$41.25 Club at the Hyatt members
*Inclusive of free flow beer
*Add $18 per person for free flow soju package
October 1, 2023
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
GIOVANNI'S CHUSEOK SPECIAL
SUNDAY BRUNCH
highlights best Korean dishes
$60 per person
$45 Club at the Hyatt members
*Inclusive of free flow beer / sparkling wine
*Add $18 per person for free flow soju package
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT SAIPAN.REGENCY.HYATT.COM
OR CALL US AT +1 (670) 234-1234. RESERVATIONS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
P.O. Box 501220 CK • Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Saipan Public Water System

ISSUE DATE: September 19, 2023
EXPIRATION DATE: Until further notice
STATE ID#: MP0000001

Who is affected?
Only customers in the villages of Chalan Kanoa, San Antonio, Afetnas, portions of Koblerville, As Perdido, As Gonno, Susupe, San Jose, Oleai, and portions of Chalan Laulau Beach Rd. on the island of Saipan are affected by this public notice. See the attached service area map for greater detail.

What happened?
The CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) promulgated a new regulation establishing a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 0.00007 mg/L for a class of constituents called Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and requires public water suppliers to measure the concentration once each calendar quarter. On July 23, 2023, the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) collected routine quarterly samples from the Isley Reservoir Tank Service Area Entry Point which services the affected areas noted above and on August 30, 2023, received sample results from its laboratory indicating the MCL for PFAS was exceeded.

Location	Sample Date	Result Date	Result	MCL
Isley Reservoir Entry Point	07/23/2023	08/30/2023	0.0001007 mg/L (100.7 parts per trillion)	0.00007 mg/L (70 parts per trillion)

What does this mean?
This is not an emergency. BECQ regulations require the issuance of a public notification within 30 days of receipt of sample results. Although this is not an emergency, as our customer, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to address the situation.

PFAS are a large, complex group of synthetic chemicals that have been used in consumer products around the world since about the 1950s. They are ingredients in various everyday products. For example, PFAS are used to keep food from sticking to packaging or cookware, make clothes and carpets resistant to stains, and create firefighting foam that is more effective.[1]

Current scientific research suggests that exposure to high levels of certain PFAS may lead to adverse health outcomes. However, research is still ongoing to determine how different levels of exposure to different PFAS can lead to a variety of health effects. Research is also underway to better understand the health effects associated with low levels of exposure to PFAS over long periods of time, especially in children.[2]

What do you need to do?
- Individuals concerned about levels of PFAS found in their drinking water should consider actions that may reduce exposure, including using an alternate water source for drinking, preparing food, cooking, brushing teeth, and any other activity when you might swallow water.
- Consumers in sensitive subgroups (pregnant or nursing women, infants and people diagnosed by their health care provider to have a compromised immune system) are advised not to drink or cook with this water and should utilize bottled water instead.
- Infant formula should be prepared with bottled water.
- It is safe to shower and bathe in tap water. Neither routine showering nor bathing are a significant source of exposure. Studies have shown very limited absorption of PFAS through the skin.[3]

What is CUC doing about it?
Before samples were even collected, CUC began to proactively address PFAS in the water supply. CUC has already installed Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) treatment units to decrease PFAS concentrations below the MCL. Additionally, CUC had already begun replacing the GAC material inside the treatment units by the time the samples were collected and, as of April 17, 2023, had completed replacement of GAC in two treatment vessels at two well locations to further decrease PFAS concentrations. As of the date of this letter all (20) twenty vessels in the (10) ten wells with GAC treatment have had the GAC replaced with new GAC. Two larger GAC units will be installed by the end of this year to provide additional treatment. CUC staff is also going to rehabilitate a large producing well with high quality water and take two wells offline that have been identified as wells having higher PFAS concentrations. CUC staff will continue to monitor by sampling the Isley Reservoir Tank Service Area Entry Point to ensure the steps being taken reduce PFAS concentrations to below the MCL.

Where can I get more information?
For more information on PFAS, see the government agency websites referenced below. For more information on this notice, please contact CUC's Corporate Communications Department at 670-664-4282.

CUC will provide an update to this public notice when the additional sample results are available from our laboratory.
1. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/pfc/index.cfm)
2. Environmental Protection Agency (https://www.epa.gov/pfas/our-current-understanding-human-health-and-environmental-risks-pfas)
3. New York State Department of Health (https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/drinkingwaterresponse/docs/atsdr_pfas_factsheet.pdf

CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

NMPASI to celebrate 30 years of service and advocacy

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

In a presentation during the Rotary Club of Saipan's weekly meeting yesterday at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan in Garapan, guest speakers from the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc. shared that NMPASI will not only be moving to a new location in the coming days, but they will also be celebrating 30 years of service in the CNMI on Sept. 30, 2023.

The celebration will take place on the anniversary night itself at the Crowne Plaza from 6pm to 10pm and will be a night filled with fun trivia questions, food, and raffle prizes. The public is invited to participate and dinner is included with the entry tickets, which is currently on sale for $50. All extra proceeds will go toward NMPASI's matching local share of grants for advocacy services.

NMPASI executive director Greg Borja said their upcoming anniversary celebration provides a forum to further the non-profit's advocacy.

"We wanted to create an outreach opportunity for us to provide information to our community and we wanted to do it in a fun way so were doing it through a trivia night, so a majority of the questions through the trivia categories will relate to people with disabilities. There's one category that's completely about disability laws and there's a number of laws out there locally and federally, so it's just a creative way to get the information out to the community in a fun manner."

He said any extra money that NMPSI earns from the event will help with their operating expenses "because we are restricted, because of the use of federal programs in terms of what we can or cannot use our funding on."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc. staff led by executive director Greg Borja, seventh from left, pose alongside Rotary Club of Saipan president Irene Holl, leftmost, and Rotary directors and officers during the club's weekly meeting yesterday at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan in Garapan.

REVIEW

From page 1

Budget Strategy Group. The group, which is composed of representatives from Finance, OMB, and the Legislature, was tasked in conducting a comprehensive review of the government's financial records, reconciliation, and identification of containment measures that will be implemented to sustain government operations.

Norita said on Friday that their Fiscal Response Team right now is doing a process of properly recording transactions that occurred outside of ARPA to ensure that is reflected in ARPA.

She said there are many transactions and that these transactions span over two years and it's taking a lot of time and extra review.

"And once the expenditures qualified and allowed, we move the expenditures so it's a lot of accounting work," the secretary pointed out.

Norita said they look forward to the additional assistance that they have been provided by the Office of Insular Affairs to help them with that.

"Because we know that it's going to take a lot of help to go through all those expenditures," she said.

The secretary said what has been shared in the past was about $116 million that was spent of ARPA cash, but was booked to the general fund.

"So, we're starting there to start the cleanup. Because all the other expenditures that we know of, were booked in ARPA. We just have to properly allocate," she said.

Norita said right now it's identifying those expenditures and working their way down from that number.

"And so with that number in mind, I believe we're about I would say around 30%-40% [complete]," she said.

The 2022 transition report on Finance noted that a preliminary reconciliation determined that the CNMI received $481.8 million in ARPA funds, but as of Dec. 27, 2022, it has overspent and has a deficit of $86 million.

ARRESTED

From page 1

States in violation of law.

The 14 individuals are Wang, Rui, Miao Fu Quan, Zhang Xiang Ke, Li Qin Jiang, Xu Zi You, Chen Qin Jun, Chen Qin, Xu Lu, Shang Guan Hui Pin, Gao Xi Pin, Xu Dong Lin, Din Hong Mei, Lin Yu Xin, and Weng Bin.

All 14 individuals are set to appear before the District Court for the NMI for a detention hearing today.

According to court documents, on Sept. 13, HSI agents conducted an enforcement operation with local and federal enforcement partners at Smiling Cove Marina on Saipan.

Prior to the operation, an HSI agent posed as a "boat captain" and entered into an agreement with one of the individuals involved in this case to transport a group to Guam in exchange for payment.

At approximately 3:56am on Sept. 13, HSI personnel and partners observed Xu's vehicle, followed by two other vehicles entering the Smiling Cove Marina area. Later, officers observed 14 individuals exiting from three vehicles.

The complaint stated that law officers observed 14 individuals putting on lifejackets near the vehicles. After, the vehicles departed the Marina.

All 14 individuals boarded the boat that was leased by and under direct HSI control.

On the boat, the undercover agent conducted a roll call of each individual listed on the charter float plan previously provided by Xu.

The "boat captain" then requested for each individual to present proof of payment for the trip.

Each individual presented a bundle of what appeared to be currency when the undercover agent called their names.

All passengers affirmed that they did not want to be detected by law enforcement officials during the trip.

All passengers also affirmed that they were willing and ready to go to Guam and refused the undercover boat captain's offer to get off the vessel if they did not want to make the trip.

After this, HSI personnel and law enforcement partners apprehended the 14 individuals.

CONFEREES

From page 1

bune last night that at yesterday's meeting the House conferees shared their concerns, then they (Senate) justified their reasons and further clarified ambiguities.

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) and House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) formed the conference committee after the House rejected the Senate's version of the budget bill last Friday.

At the start of the meeting yesterday, Yumul said they did state three main concerns from the rejection of the Senate version.

Yumul said the first one was the concern of Group Health Life Insurance, as well as Medicaid, and lastly to restore the $560,000 funding to the Saipan mayor, or the budget that was removed.

Rep. John Paul P. Sablan (Ind-Saipan) reminded the Senate conferees that they had discussed this when they did revise the 2023 fiscal budget and it was at that time the understanding that come fiscal year 2024 that they restore funds to the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Sablan said of concern also was the reduction of the $690,000 on the Saipan Mayor's Office absent any audience with Mayor Ramon Blas Camacho to find out at least how much American Rescue Plan Act funds are still available and would it suffice for this upcoming fiscal year proposed budget.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

HAZE

From page 1

reports of haze across Saipan and northern parts of Rota this morning. Based on available weather information at this time, we believe it from the volcanic activity in the Hawaiian Islands that been carried to the northern CNMI via the trade winds," said NWS' statement.

More specifically, multispectral satellite imagery showed a narrowband of haze reaching the Marianas along easterly trade-wind flow pointing back to the Hawaii region.

NWS stated that it is likely this haze originated during the recent Kilauea activity from Sept. 10 to16.

"Depending on winds around the Marianas, the density of haze will be variable the next few days," the forecast states.

Due to this, NWS warns the communities of the CNMI that haze may remain on the islands for the next couple of days as trades winds continue.

"For the next few days, expect the trade winds to continue with only a few isolated showers. This may keep haze around the northern CNMI," said NWS.

In response, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, in conjunction with the CNMI Homeland Security has issued a volcanic haze advisory which will remain in effect through the next few days.

According to the advisory, the CNMI community can expect reduced visibility to below 5 miles from volcanic haze and individuals with poor respiratory conditions are encouraged to stay indoors.

Although this haze is no threat to the CNMI, Palacios says residents and visitors are advised to listen and stay informed for the latest statements and forecasts from the NWS and CNMI EOC.

"Keep alert for any statements from local officials or call the CNMI Emergency Operations center at 670-237-8000 or on HF single side band radio at frequency 5.205.0," said the advisory.

TINIAN

From page 2

The work will continue regardless of what happens," she said.

Aldan, in his letter, highlighted some of King-Hinds' accomplishments in her tenure as board chair.

A few of her accomplishments as CPA chair, Aldan said, consist of the Divert Airfield Lease Agreement which resulted in the $21.9 million for port infrastructure projects, working with the U.S. Department of Defense on the Innovative Readiness Training projects on Tinian, completing Tinian's Departure Terminal, the Tinian Marina Improvement Project, the renovation of Tinian's ARFF building, the ongoing Saipan Commuter Terminal construction and road paving improvements, Rota's ARFF building improvements, small boat marina slips, perimeter fence replacement, and more.

"We have complete confidence that Mrs. King-Hinds will continue to serve the CPA Board with distinction and diligently work to strengthen the prosperity and resilience of our port facilities given her exemplary qualifications and her unwavering dedication to the public's interest," the Tinian mayor said.

LB

From page 3

lion deficit is only for the third quarter reporting.

Demapan said for the three quarters or for the nine months of fiscal year 2023, the accumulative deficit is showing here at $68,196,467.

"And those numbers are based from her report. So, I stand that my report that I submitted to the Senate is correct. And I can have anybody look at the analysis that I did and see what that person will interpret whether my balance of my reporting is correct or wrong," he said.

Even with the third quarter, Demapan said, Norita's reporting is understated because his reporting for the deficit is showing that its $53.3 million.

"So, I don't understand how she come up with $10.1 million.

We're not using the numbers on our own. We're basing the numbers based from her report to the Legislature," he said.

Demapan said he believes that the most reliable information that they can justify and prove whether the true deficit for the last nine months in fiscal year 2023 is $68 million, is to have Norita generate a complete financial statements of the general fund.

"What I mean is she would have to generate a balance sheet to the general fund and the statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance so we can determine exactly how much is the general fund deficit for the past nine months of fiscal year 2023," he added.

Demapan obtained a master of science in professional accountancy at the Walsh College in Michigan. From 1988 to 1991, he worked as a staff auditor with Deloitte Saipan.

Cabrera hopes to fill CNMI veterinarian role through 2 master's programs

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lauren Cabrera, Saipan Humane Society founder and executive director, is hoping to fill the role of veterinarian in the region through two master's degrees—Veterinary Clinical Care and Veterinary Medical Sciences with a concentration in Shelter Medicine.

Currently, with Saipan Cares for Animals closed down, SHS at the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido provides the only veterinary care available in the CNMI.

The 34-year-old is doing prerequisites for both programs with the end goal to create a veterinary midlevel provider role in the CNMI.

With a full $60,000 scholarship for the Veterinary Clinical Care, or veterinary midlevel provider program at Colorado State University (three semesters online and two on campus), Cabrera will receive basic skills and surgical training similar to that of a veterinarian for routine procedures such as spay/neuter surgeries.

With that, she will be able to fill the role of a veterinarian in a region where it is difficult to recruit a veterinarian full-time. She will be supervised by collaborating veterinarians who will mentor her remotely.

The Lynn Raulerson Trust, which granted her scholarship, also funded the development of Guam Animals in Need or GAIN's spay/neuter clinic and also provided SHS with start-up clinic funds.

Her second master's degree in Shelter Medicine at the University of Florida (online), is with the focus on preventing and managing infectious diseases in animal shelters, managing behavior and welfare issues, best practices for population management, shelter medicine, etc.

The program is funded through the support and generosity of one of her mentors Dr. Bob Murtaugh, who "has been integral in providing crucial connections for us to increase animal health services on Saipan. While he wears many hats, Dr. Murtaugh is leading the initiative to expand access to veterinary care in the U.S. by establishing the midlevel provider role," said Cabrera.

"I am already using things I have learned in this program to improve dog population management strategies in the CNMI!" she said about it so far.

Nationally, Cabrera said, "the hope is that veterinary midlevel providers can fill needs in other underserved areas of the country, remote areas, and animal shelters."

According to Cabrera, the U.S. only has 116,000 practicing veterinarians and will need an additional 41,000 by 2030, if pet ownership continues to grow at its current pace. With only about 3,200 students graduating veterinarian school each year from 32 accredited veterinarian schools, and approximately 2,000 veterinarians retiring annually, the outlook is not great.

Because of the veterinarian shortage, there is a movement to create the Veterinary Nurse Practitioner role to fill this gap—similar to a nurse practitioner or physician assistant (midlevel provider).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lauren Cabrera, Saipan Humane Society's founder and executive director, is in two master's programs—Veterinary Clinical Care and Veterinary Medical Sciences with a concentration in Shelter Medicine—with the goal to fill a much-needed veterinarian role in the CNMI.

Cabrera said, "While I contemplated returning to school for a full veterinary program, it did not make sense for me to pursue another four-year degree that would take me away from the CNMI and Guam."

When asked how she got involved with helping animals, Cabrera, who also cared for humans as a nurse practitioner, said she is a lifelong animal lover as she grew up training horses and loving dogs.

She moved to Guam and married Saipan native Felix Cabrera Jr. It was in Guam where she helped found the Boonie Flight Project that so far has helped ship over 600 rescued boonie dogs from Guam and Saipan to adopters in the U.S. and Canada. She also helped reopen Guam's low-cost spay/neuter clinic under the animal shelter, GAIN.

She moved to Saipan last year and has used the skills developed under mentorship of Guam and GAIN veterinarians to oversee the clinical side of a large spay/neuter campaign with Boonie Babies and the Saipan Mayor's Office Shelter that summer, sterilizing 500 animals.

"I brought the GAIN team to Saipan for a spay/neuter campaign in January 2023, and was inspired to start a new non-profit focused on improving animal welfare by increasing access to veterinary care while also reducing dog and cat overpopulation in a humane way," said Cabrera.

"Saipan Humane Society was born! Our incredible board and my good friend Ruby Ma collaborated to build this organization from the start, later joined by Lupe Attao and her unique nonprofit management talents. We now have three full-time staff and offer animal health clinics four days weekly, with intermittent visiting veterinarian's visits for surgery, out of the Saipan Mayor's Office animal shelter. Since our start we have seen hundreds of sick pets, given hundreds of vaccines and flea/tick preventives. We have saved lives. It is amazing to see everything grow so quickly!" she said.

For inquiries about veterinary services reach out to Saipan Humane Society at info@saipanhumanesociety.org or Whatsapp (670) 838-7387.

IPI creditor intervenes in Gray's request for receivership

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Century Estate Investment Ltd., an Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC creditor that lent IPI over $5 million back in 2022, has filed a motion to intervene in the receivership sought by Joshua Gray to sell IPI's personal property.

Century Estate, through attorney Matthew T. Gregory, has filed a motion to intervene in Gray's request for receivership before the U.S. District Court for the NMI claiming that the loan it granted IPI of over $9 million back in 2022 should take precedence over Gray's judgment.

"Century Estate rescued [IPI] from its debts and cash flow problems. The substantial funds were provided by Century Estate on the basis of a loan secured under a mortgage of IPI's collateralized assets. Thus, Century Estate Investment Limited has a secured interest in [IPI] assets that is prior and superior to any other party. [IPI] has not made repayment to Century Estate and is in full default of the loan. Century Estate now seeks to intervene in this action in order to have the right to move forward and order liquidation of assets toward mitigation of losses from its outlay under the loan," said Gregory.

According to Gregory, on Feb. 1, 2022, Century Estate provided a loan to IPI for the purpose of maintaining ongoing construction, surviving its debts, and reviving low cash flow.

"In conjunction with making the loan, Century Estate took a first priority security interest/mortgage in [IPI's] collateral assets.The total amount due and owing on Century Estate's loan to [IPI] is currently $9 million plus 8% interest per annum. [IPI] has defaulted on the loan, and the total amount remains due to Century Estate Investment Limited. Century Estate Investment Limited seeks to intervene in this matter to protect its interest in the collateralized assets and to liquidate the assets in order mitigate the substantial losses from [IPI's] default," Gregory said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, over a week ago, IPI former employee Joshua Gray, through attorneys Aaron Halegua and Bruce Berline, filed a petition for an order to show cause to appoint a limited receiver to sell IPI's personal property.

Specifically, Gray is petitioning the U.S. District Court for the NMI to issue an order compelling IPI to justify why Clear Management Ltd. should not be appointed as limited receiver to sell IPI's personal property which were seized through a writ of execution previously granted in his Gray's favor.

On May 31, 2023, the District Court entered judgment in favor of Gray against IPI in the amount of $5,686,182.20 plus pre-judgment interest, post-judgment interest, and attorneys' fees and costs.

On July 3, 2023, since IPI did not pay the judgment or post a bond, Gray applied for a writ of execution against certain assets belonging to IPI.

IPI did not file a timely opposition to that application.

On Aug. 16, 2023, the court issued a writ of execution in favor of Gray and the clerk issued a notice about the writ and informing IPI of its rights.

On Aug. 21, 2023, the U.S. Marshals Service filed a notice affirming that the writ was executed.

CNMI patients can now apply for free Merck medicines

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eligible patients in the Marianas can now apply for free medication through Merck's Patient Assistance Program, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP).

Merck's Patient Assistance Program, which is a private and confidential program, provides medicines, free of charge, for up to one year to eligible individuals, mostly the uninsured, who, without their assistance, could not afford needed Merck medicines.

According to Merck's Patient Assistance Program, among the three conditions to be eligible is if a patient is a U.S. resident and has a prescription for a Merck medicine from a health care provider licensed in the U.S. A patient does not have to be a U.S. citizen to be eligible.

Sablan

Sablan, in his e-kilili newsletter over the weekend, said previously, only patients living in the 50 states, Washington, D.C., or Puerto Rico were eligible to apply.

Merk's decision this week is the result of Sablan's ongoing work to make free or reduced cost medication programs that are available in the rest of the United States, available to residents of the Marianas too.

Sablan said at his congressional office's urging, Genentech, Pfizer, and Bristol Myers Squibb have already agreed to extend their free and reduced cost prescription drug programs to low-income and uninsured patients in the islands.

He said this week's addition of the Marianas to Merck's program is also timely as access to COVID-19 medicines moves to the traditional commercial model starting November.

Sablan said the Merck program will now provide the oral antiviral drug Lagevrio free of charge to eligible COVID-19 patients who, without assistance, could not otherwise afford the medication.

SIS installs Little Libraries

You may have seen a little bird-house box at the Shack or traveling around the U.S. mainland, but Saipan International School is the newest location to host a "Little Free Library: Take a Book, Leave a Book" for its community.

The first Little Free Library was built in 2009 by the Todd Bol in Wisconsin, as a tribute to his late mother, a former teacher and book lover. Bol put a wooden container on his lawn and filled it with books. The idea caught and soon these small book houses started sprouting up across the Midwest.

The little library is basically a community book exchange. Community members are free to take a book that looks interesting to them and, sometime in the future, bring it back or donate a totally different one. SIS has two side-by-side libraries and according to Jeremy Anderberg, a professional book reviewer, this has tremendous benefits to a community, including:

SIS

Browsing for books in Saipan International School's Children's Library.

■ Promoting literacy: According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 21% of U.S. adults suffer from low English literacy skills, making it difficult for them to function in the workplace. SIS has a large portion of English language learners, whose first language is not English. The book houses provide an avenue for our student and parent population to gain greater access to reading material. But SIS doesn't limit the library to English books only. "Increasing mother-tongue fluency is shown to benefit overall literacy rates," said Dr. Ron Snyder, SIS headmaster. "And we encourage all of our stakeholders to develop literacy skills, regardless of language."

SIS

The Little Libraries at Saipan International School.

SIS

Investigating young adult books in the Little Library.

■ Promoting neighborliness: With the advent of social media, permeating our lives and increasing our isolation, developing a sense of community is a greater challenge than ever before. By installing a little free library, SIS hopes to create the neighborhood that it wants its children to grow up in, a neighborhood not only of academics and literacy development, but one of friendliness, well-being and community spirit.

■ Expanding literary horizons: It is easy to get stuck in a genre, only reading the types of books that you have read before. But the workplace is increasingly looking for well-rounded individuals, people who can adjust to the ever-increasing rate of change in our world. A little library expands horizons exponentially. The SIS Little Library has books from Tom Clancy, fantasy and SciFi novels, political, and self-help books. They might not be interesting in the end, but the simple act of browsing through a book opens up new possibilities.

■ Meeting new people: The SIS Little Library is open at all times but the school hopes that while waiting for an appointment, or a parent teacher conference, parents might gather around the Little Library and strike up a conversation. The Little Library and the books contained within provide an excuse for small-talk and, perhaps, the start of a new friendship.

■ Cultivating a spirit of generosity: One of SIS' virtues is compassion, which includes performing service for others. SIS believes that a spirit of generosity will help develop this sense of service beyond self and contributing to the Little Library will add to that sense of giving back to the community. The donations might be small and no longer needed at the home but the simple act of giving, will help develop the sense of generosity that SIS hopes to see.

The materials needed for a Little Library are readily available on Saipan. SIS would like to encourage all schools to install their own Little Libraries and reap all of the benefits they bring. ***(PR)***

SIS

Grade 4 students pose in front of Little Library.

SISTER REMEDIOS BUILDING FACILITY FOR RENT

Available for rent is a two-storey building (semi-concrete), the MMB Sister Remedios Building in Chalan Kanoa #2. Building size is approximately 155 ft. x 42 ft. with stairs, common areas and restrooms. First and second floor (approximately 6,000 square feet each floor) and common exterior areas. Parking lot has 32 stalls including two disability access spaces. Additional area may be available for playground/activity area. Several used split a/c units are in-place from former tenants. Smal water-tank available. 5 separate CUC power meters. Building has network wiring in-place.

Suitable and acceptable uses include office space, church, (business) non-profit organization; school; daycare and early childhood/preschool facility. Not suitable for other purposes such as poker room; bar or other inappropriate businesses. Fenced and gated perimeter. Rear Annex building may be available, depending on proposal for rent/lease of the entire premises (approximately 7,000 square meters).

Minimum Terms: Minimum three (3) year lease (longer term may be available). Tenant is responsible for maintenance and repairs of the building/property. Asking $5,000.00 per month/ negotiable.

To schedule an appointment to meet and discuss, please contact: Law Office of Robert T. Torres, counsel for Mercederian Missionaries of Berriz (MMB) at rttlaw@gmail.com or Whatsapp/Text: 287-7859.

NOTICE: Inspections/ Walk-through by MMB-authorized appointment only.

BLACK MICRO CORPORATION

Saluda St., Lower Navy Hill
PMB 766, Box 10001 Saipan, MP 96950
Contact Person: Remi Sablan
(670) 322-4861 (office) • (670) 785-2598 (cell)
Email: remedios@blackguam.com

BLACK MICRO IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Black Micro Corporation is seeking qualified candidates for the position of:

EXPERIENCED HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS

- Must be able to work fulltime including weekends, as needed.
- Must have experience in operating heavy equipment, such as Dozer and Excavator.
- Food/Lodging provided at the Workforce Housing.
- One round trip ticket from Saipan-Tinian provided.

Submit resume to:
Remi Sablan
email address: remedios@blackguam.com
or to our Saipan Office at:
Black Micro Corporation
Saluda St., Lower Navy Hill
Crisostomo Building, Suite 101/102
Contact No. (670) 322-4861 / (670) 785-2598

Employment application may be downloaded from our website at: www.blackconstructionguam.com

UOG alum returns to Guam to practice law

When Travis John Cabe Aguon graduated from the University of Guam in 2019 with degrees in Secondary Education and English for Education, it provided him with a launch pad to do more.

The magna cum laude alumnus initially taught English to ninth-grade students at Okkodo High School.

"I chose to pursue a degree in education because I came from a long line of teachers, and so it made sense to me that I become a teacher as well," Aguon said. "I was very passionate about teaching because I have always enjoyed helping students reach their fullest potential."

But when COVID-19 hit, Aguon paused his teaching career. He decided to shift to law school.

Today, he's back home, in Guam, with a newly minted Juris Doctorate degree from Seattle University School of Law. He graduated in May 2023 and is a bar exam result away from practicing law.

He hopes to start his law career as an associate attorney at the Arriola Law Firm. He also is interested in environmental law.

And he plans to be a mentor to future aspiring law school students from Guam.

UOG

Travis John Cabe Aguon is joined by his parents John P.L. Aguon and Deborah C. Aguon at his graduation from Seattle University School of Law in May 2023.

"My long-term goals include eventually starting my own law firm and establishing a system that can allow aspiring lawyers access to essential information related to studying for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), applying to law schools, etc.," he said.

Mentoring others is his way of showing appreciation to those who helped guide him through his academic path at UOG.

"My UOG mentors really encouraged me to push the boundaries and to go after all the things I wanted and more!" Aguon said.

His main UOG mentors were Dr. Michelle Santos at the School of Education and Dr. Christopher Garcia at the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Before he left Guam for law school, Aguon was active in the local theater scene.

He was part of "Mulan Jr." and "The Little Mermaid" in high school and performed in popular hit musicals in Guam such as "Miss Saigon" in 2016, "RENT" in 2018, and "Mamma Mia!" in 2019.

He believes his theater experience will help him in the legal arena.

"Essentially, both involve sharing your story and convincing the audience to believe your story," Aguon said.

For UOG students who are experiencing struggles, Aguon shared that the years of sacrifice to stay in college until they graduate will pay off for the rest of their lives.

"Every challenge is for a reason," he said. "They may not recognize what that reason is right now, but they will years down the line."

"Finally, one thing that always got me through every challenge in school was something that my dad always told me: 'They can take away your car, and they can take away your house; however, nobody can ever take away your education.'"

"It is this exact quote that got me through law school when I felt that I could not do it, and I am standing here today as a first-generation lawyer," Aguon said. ***(PR)***

UOG

Travis John Cabe Aguon graduated magna cum laude from the University of Guam in 2019 with degrees in Secondary Education and English for Education. He graduated from Seattle University School of Law in May 2023.

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

OUR PLATFORM

No matter which advertising platform you choose, we can help you deliver your ad message to your target audience

Pinned FB post
FB Video
FB Stories (Poll. Swipe Up)
▶ FACEBOOK

IG Post
IG Stories
▶ INSTAGRAM

Banner Skycraper
Right Tile
TAGA Plus
▶ WEB

FOR MORE ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES,
CALL (670) 235-NEWS (6397)

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 187

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Vaccines and effective treatments alleviate the need for COVID restrictions

More than three years since COVID-19 reached these shores, widespread misinformation continues to inhibit reasonable measures intended to keep the vulnerable safe and to protect public health.

The latest fiction riling folks up is the falsehood that a new COVID wave will usher in the return of statewide mask mandates, school closures or business restrictions. But this isn't 2020 and it's important those myths be dispelled.

It's true that there are new variants of the virus widely circulating across the United States, including here in Virginia. This was expected and public health officials have been closely monitoring the spread of these mutations and their danger to the general population.

The country is better equipped than ever to fight these or subsequent COVID variants. Vaccines continue to be the most effective weapon to combat the virus, but medical professionals are also better informed and better equipped to treat those who are infected.

The number of COVID deaths has also increased slightly in recent weeks, though that's cause for caution, not alarm. Those figures pale in comparison to the darkest days of the pandemic, though seniors, the immunocompromised and those with chronic health conditions continue to be at greatest risk.

The expiration of emergency and public health orders related to the pandemic means there is less data about the disease, since fewer people are testing for the virus or reporting the results. There is no longer a trustworthy repository for up-to-date information about infections or community spread.

The absence of that data makes it difficult for members of the public to know whether their communities are seeing a spike in cases or when waves subside. Especially for those at-risk groups, making informed decisions about masking, for instance, can be challenging.

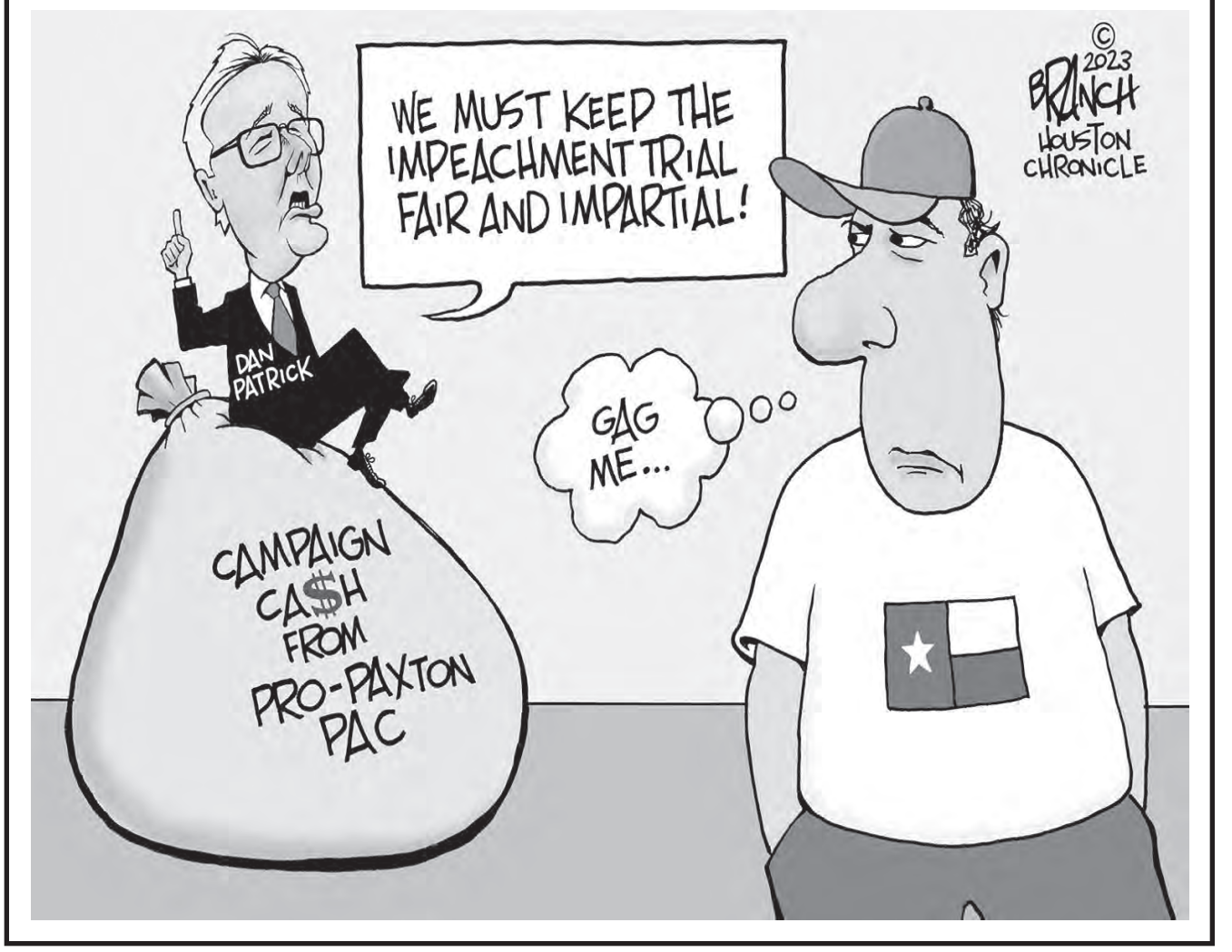
What won't happen, though, is a return to public mask orders, virtual schooling or restrictions on businesses. Not only are they politically untenable, the development of vaccines effectively makes them moot. Absent a particularly lethal variant, we're not returning to 2020-era lockdowns, nor should we.

Yes, some individual schools recommended masking in recent weeks, but these represent a limited, local solution to outbreaks. The notion that entire states—or the nation—will return to the pre-vaccine measures of 2020 is farcical. Not that it's stopped the scaremongers from trying to stir up a panic.

Last week, a Maryland elementary school—one single school—that imposed a 10-day requirement had to beef up security after a critical social media post by U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, resulted in threats. Semafor reported this week that a recent focus group of New Hampshire Republicans found participants believed "there was some connection between the recent rise of COVID cases and associated restrictions and the upcoming election being 'rigged' for Democrats."

Thankfully, most people are smart enough to see through that nonsense. They recognize they must take responsibility for their

See VACCINES on Page 9


WE MUST KEEP THE IMPEACHMENT TRIAL FAIR AND IMPARTIAL!
DAN PATRICK
GAG ME...
CAMPAIGN CA$H FROM PRO-PAXTON PAC
©2023 BRANCH HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Impeachment blues and blahs

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive.

America's slip-slide into seemingly nonstop impeachment politics may be boring the bejabbers out of most of the country. But for Donald Trump, it's a good-news feeling—at long last.

This past week, the good-news gods delivered for Trump two gifts he wasn't sure he'd ever get. And I have a hunch he knows he's also got a third gift—it just hasn't yet made its way into the consciousness of our conventional wisdom.

Tuesday's Gift: House Speaker Kevin McCarthy—performing once again as if he is Speaker Charlie McCarthy, sitting on Trump's right knee—announced (perhaps with a little help from his string-puller) that he has unilaterally directed three House committees to open an impeachment inquiry into the man who defeated him, President Joe Biden.

Thursday's Gift: Hunter Biden was indicted on three federal gun charges that had nothing to do with any of those financial investigations concerning his profiteering while his dad was a public official. He was charged with making false statements that did not disclose his drug use when he bought a handgun in 2018 and illegally possessing the gun. It was part of his plea deal that collapsed. It is the first time a sitting U.S. president's child has ever been indicted.

McCarthy's impeachment inquiry announcement seemed to have nothing to do with the crisis with which most of Washington was preoccupied – the fact that the unfunded federal government was hurtling toward a shutdown. Yet his launching of the official House impeachment inquiry was part of his effort to appease his party's far-right wing, which was adamant about pushing to shut down the government unless Congress enacts drastic spending cuts.

McCarthy assigned three House committees to determine whether President Joe Biden benefited financially from the private business dealings of his son. McCarthy's move was a departure from all previous modern era impeachment inquiries in that previous extensive investigations had not found any evidence of wrongdoings on the part of Joe Biden. Republican probes indeed found that Hunter made millions of dollars from a Ukrainian energy company and Chinese businesses while his father was vice president. But those past probes found no proof that Joe Biden benefited financially from his son's unseemly, even if not illegal, private profiteering from his father's connections.

In the midst of all that, of course, Trump spent the week seeing to his legal obligations concerning the four pending court cases that will ultimately define his future. He faces trials on cases ranging from his efforts as a sitting president to overthrow his 2020 re-election defeat, to his alleged efforts to keep classified documents, to crimes stemming from his hush money payment to a porn star.

Meanwhile, Americans are now being absolutely overwhelmed by the gush of mega-specifics and micro-details about all the allegations we have been flooded with for years during Trump's two impeachments and now his four pending court cases. Now comes the fact flood about Joe Biden's impeachment inquiry and Hunter Biden's enrichments and addictions.

And the Hunter follies will lead us to recycle Trump's daughter Ivanka's deeds as a White House official who traveled with her dad to China, where officials then fast-tracked approval of 18 trademarks for her company. And especially her husband, Jared Kushner, who quit as Trump's top adviser on dealings on many policies and places, including Saudi Arabia—and six months later got $2 billion from an investment fund controlled by the Saudi crown prince.

No wonder Americans are already hearing all that as just a stream of incomprehensible blahblahblah. And that gets us to what may be the third gift Trump got this past week. Namely: The House Republicans' Biden impeachment inquiry will force Team Biden to refute each false claim and explain each of Hunter's legal-but-dumb deeds. Trump, a man with a golden ear for gab, knows ordinary folks are already tuning out Team Biden's denials.

America's 45th president could learn perhaps the one trick he doesn't already know, from our 36th president—LBJ. One of Lyndon Johnson's favorite jokes was about an old Texas congressman who, after years of running without opposition, finally had a smooth-talking opponent. So he hired his first press secretary and gave him his first order: Plant a story in the newspaper that says my opponent had (improper relations) with a barnyard animal.

Well, the new press secretary asked: Do we have any proof? To which the old congressman veritably shouted his reply: "Proof hell – just get him to deny it!"

This is why Washington's last surviving pundit may be the one who just nods and meaninglessly proclaims: The future remains to be seen.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Framers would likely agree with disqualifying Trump under the 14th Amendment

By IVAN ELAND
Tribune News Service

Ivan Eland is senior fellow with the Independent Institute and author of several books, including, "Eleven Presidents: Promises vs. Results in Achieving Limited Government," and "War the Rogue Presidency: Restoring the Republic after Congressional Failure."

At least four eminent legal scholars have recently stirred controversy by arguing that Donald Trump—indicted, among other things, on federal and state charges related to the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and attempted soft coup to illegally overturn the results of the 2020 election and remain in power—could be disqualified from the presidential office again under Section 3 of the post-Civil War 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment bars people from holding federal or state offices if they swore an oath to support the Constitution but then engaged in insurrection or rebellion against that framework or gave aid or comfort to the enemies thereof.

The scholars have argued that the provision is self-enforcing—that is, that Trump could be thrown off state ballots for the 2024 election because he engaged in the Jan. 6 insurrection and coup and also gave aid and comfort to other insurrectionists involved in storming the Capitol to attempt to interfere with congressional approval of the 2020 election results, and thus the hallowed legal transfer of government power to a newly elected president.

The four legal scholars include three conservatives and one progressive, the most prominent of which are conservative retired judge Michael Luttig and eminent progressive Harvard law professor Lawrence Tribe. I write in support of the scholars' position but from a historical and systemic perspective rather than a legal one.

The scholars' argument has raised some eyebrows among many Republican populists and even some Democrats. One of the major arguments against their position is that disqualifying Trump in this way is "undemocratic" and that for the purposes of political legitimacy, it would be better to just beat Trump at the ballot box in November 2024.

In a free country, one certainly needs to be careful when disqualifying candidates from running for office—note how authoritarian countries (such as Iran and Pakistan) try to disqualify candidates from elections who might give the regime in power a run for its money at the polls or even defeat it.

But a republican (small "r") government should have the capability to defend itself against unconstitutional insurrections or rebellions that threaten its very survival. The threat of Donald Trump, who engaged in such behavior and aided and abetted others, taking office again is likely the greatest internal threat to the American republic in the country's history.

Even the Confederate states during the Civil War, despite their desire to perpetuate the monstrous and heinous institution of slavery, never tried to overthrow or extinguish the American Constitution, as Trump has done; they fought instead to go their own way and create a separate, but ignominious, slaveholding country.

In contrast, from Trump's abominable actions on Jan. 6 and irresponsible rhetoric—including that he wants to "terminate" (not just suspend) the Constitution, intends to take retribution and even arrest political opponents, and has claimed that Article II of the Constitution allows him to do anything he pleases—we can gleam that his authoritarian populist (not conservative) first term will likely pale in comparison to the wreckage he will bring to the American republic if he is able to hold the presidency again.

Admittedly, disqualifying a candidate might seem "undemocratic" to an American public that has been schooled by politicians to revere democracy, but several practical and historical points should be made.

First, we don't have national elections for any federal office in America (even the presidential election is usually determined by a state-by-state Electoral College system), and thus state officials logically have been given primary responsibility for conducting American elections. State officials regularly make decisions, using appropriate due process procedures, on ballot access for candidates to comply with state and federal qualification requirements. Such officials should just be allowed to do their jobs to determine whether Trump is eligible to be on the ballot, given the ample evidence put forth by the congressional Jan. 6 committee and findings in court cases related to Jan. 6 that Trump ran afoul of the insurrection provision.

It may be more of a judgment call for these state officials than just determining whether Trump is 35 years old and a natural born citizen, which are other requirements to hold the presidency, but assessing candidate qualifications for ballot access is in their job descriptions and they should be allowed to do it. (And if Trump is not now disqualified, gets elected again in 2024, and then runs as an incumbent yet again in 2028—again essentially refusing to leave office regardless of the outcome--these same state officials will need to make a more clear-cut decision to disqualify him under the two-time presidential election limit of the 22nd Amendment.)

The modern Republican Party has always advocated for "states' rights" and concomitantly that the federal courts should exhibit judicial restraint; this process comports nicely with those principles. However, the author is not naïve enough to think that an issue as important as this one will not eventually make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. But to get there, it should go through these state processes and courts first.

More important, although just letting Trump run and again rolling the dice about whether he will hold office might be more democratic, the historical newsflash is that the Constitution's framers were suspicious of democracy. The tripartite American national government was never set up to be as efficient as the British (or any other) parliamentary system; its main purpose was to prevent tyranny—of an overweening executive or of a permanent majority faction.

The Framers admired the Roman Republic rather than the direct democracy of ancient Greece. Thus, in their unusual written Constitution, they created many checks and balances to contain tyranny by an aggrandizing individual or any permanent majority group: for example, a bicameral Congress; an independent executive and judiciary to act primarily as a check on what they thought would be the dominant legislative branch; a federalist structure that would retain powerful state governments; and a Bill of Rights that would insure that a tyrannical executive or majoritarian faction could not crush the individual rights of minority interests or populations.

Continuing in that spirit, Section 3 of the 14th Amendment can be seen, in the wake of the massive Civil War, as another important check to shore up the defenses of republican government from unconstitutional attempts to subvert it through unconstitutional means.

And tyranny is knocking at the American door. The potent combination of the rise of the imperial presidency—having usurped power from the other branches of government and the states for more than a century and distorted the Framers' vision of a more equal division of power vertically and horizontally throughout government—and an authoritarian 2024 candidate who has already tried to lead, aid, and abet an insurrection and coup against the American Constitution requires the republic to invoke Section 3 of the 14th Amendment as the only last-ditch failsafe defense against the very real potential for the demagogic and autocratic demise of a republic that has lasted 235 years.

Simpatico Senescent Sonnets

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

ATROPHY ENTROPY APATHY SYMPATHY

A Querulous Quartet

Atrophy attacking my whims and whimsy
Entropy enveloping my old gray matter
Apathy approaches, my excuses are flimsy
Sympathy slows down, my thoughts sadder

Atrophy attacking my upper and lower limbs
Entropy enters all my nascent neural synapses
Apathy apparent as cognitive dissonance dims
Sympathy stutters, fools others then collapses

Atrophy accumulates in all of my body parts
Entropy evolves and erupts in my brain space
Apathy antagonizes thoughts in fits and starts
Sympathy survives this development just in case

Four ways of fumbling stumbling and still growing
When my spinning wheel stops no way of knowing.

Diurnal Dimentia Dilemma

Asking – my senile dementia asks
Beeping – my brain blips and beeps
Creeping – my corpus callosum creeps
Tasking – I toddle through daily tasks
Demanding – my senile dementia demands
Eliminating – much forgetting and eliminating
Freeing – every now and then it frees
Commanding – thoughts common sense commands
Perpetuating – it slowly silently perpetuates
Flees – as memory of the task at hand flees
Gathering – thinking clearly no longer gathers
Killing – cobwebs that a senescent spider kills
Sometimes I forget to do my dirty dishes
My pen works on what my brain wishes.

N.B. These "senescent" sonnets are as close as I come to "stream of consciousness."

Poetry.., William James coined the term which is close to the Buddhist idea of citta-santâna, or "stream of mind." "The contents of the mind stream are very similar to what we understand as consciousness today. It's a combination of information from our senses, influenced by our feelings, perceptions, and past knowledge." Quote is from Practical Psychology, 2022. Sometimes I wake up with a word or phrase on my mind, ie. apathy and entropy, I write them down and some words related to them in my notebook. I come back to them or find them in a notebook weeks or months later and within 7 to 10 minutes I have a rough stream of consciousness sonnet about them. Revision and proofreading follow. Enjoy.

VACCINES

From page 8

own well-being, for better or worse. The federal government won't even pay for at-home tests, much less do what's needed to compile comprehensive, updated data about outbreaks. And in Virginia, don't expect Gov. Glenn Youngkin to do much of anything in regard to the virus.

Save this: The governor has used his office to promote vaccination, which is to his credit. He should continue that messaging as the new boosters become available, to better protect Virginians and to guard against new variants.

The infuriating aspect of this bogus controversy is that public officials had an opportunity to reduce the need for masks by using COVID relief funds to improve HVAC systems in schools, government buildings and other indoor public spaces. Researchers knew early in the pandemic that good airflow mitigates the spread of infection, but did precious little to adapt to this new reality.

So don't listen to the alarmists. Get the vaccine and get boosted. When case numbers rise, wear a mask if you prefer. Be smart and be cautious, but understand this isn't 2020. The worst is behind us.

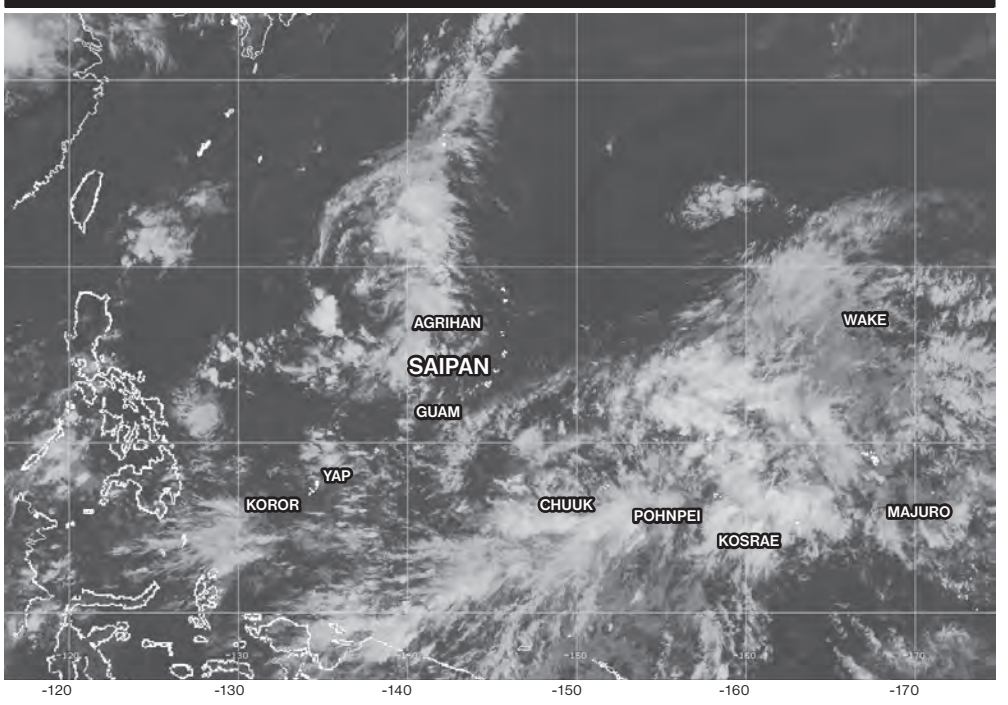
©2023 The Virginian-Pilot.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy. A 30 percent chance of showers.	Mostly cloudy. A 30 percent chance of showers.
87° 79°	88° 79°	87° 79°	88° 79°	88° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:58 AM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Scattered showers were mainly near Guam this morning. A monsoonal pattern will develop over the area the next few days. This pattern will bring occasional showers and thunderstorms are expected through the weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	83° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:05 AM	6:15 PM
Thursday	6:05 AM	6:14 PM
Friday	6:05 AM	6:13 PM
Saturday	6:06 AM	6:12 PM
Sunday	6:06 AM	6:12 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:04 AM	9:36 PM	-
Thursday	11:01 AM	10:25 PM	-
Friday	12:00 PM	11:20 PM	-
Saturday	1:01 PM	-	-
Sunday	-	12:21 AM	2:01 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	63° / 52°
Beijing	Sunny	77° / 55°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 76°
London	Windy	59° / 48°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	81° / 63°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	70° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
New York	Mostly Sunny	79° / 65°
Osaka	Showers	82° / 70°
Paris	Showers	66° / 50°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	77° / 66°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	82° / 64°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	91° / 70°
San Francisco	Sunny	69° / 52°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	75° / 61°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	86° / 72°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	85° / 72°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
4:40 AM	Low Tide	0.22
11:14 AM	High Tide	1.70
4:49 PM	Low Tide	1.09
10:07 PM	High Tide	1.75

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1 up to Sep 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR 111	7:05AM	9:05AM	7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily up to Sep 4
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily from Sep 5

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1 up to Sep 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
PR110	11:40PM	5:35AM+1	6
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Crowne Plaza treats *man'amko* to special lunch

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Bringing smiles to Saipan's elderly, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan staff visited the Office on Aging in Garapan last Monday where they provided a special lunch to the island's *man'amko* or senior citizens.

Crowne Plaza general manager Robert Coates said the initiative was part of their "Giving for Good" month.

"This is what we call our 'Giving for Good' in the month of September where we give for good... it's a month of different activities where we give back to the community. We've got a few activities taking place but this is a main activity that we're doing, which is lunch for this special group of people—our senior citizens—and recognizing what they've done for the community. Our kitchen prepares lunch and all of our team will be here serving the lunch and hopefully it's something nice for the residents," he said.

A total of 60 *man'amkos* enjoyed the special lunch with the bright smiles around the room indicative of their appreciation of Crowne Plaza's generous gesture.

Aside from lunch, the Office on Aging congregates also took part in karaoke with some of the songs dedicated to the Crowne Plaza staff.

Office on Aging executive director Walter Manglona was very grateful for Crowne Plaza staff taking time off from their busy schedule to drop by and serve the *man'amko* a special lunch.

"When I received word from my friend, Das Krishnan (Crowne Plaza banquet manager), about a couple of weeks ago we were talking about scheduling an event where they can give back to the seniors. One of the main highlights of our program is our nutrition program and we communicated about maybe establishing a hosting event. It's something that our seniors can enjoy and have a good time and celebrate with each other to celebrate life."

In behalf of the Office on Aging's *man'amko*, Manglona then thanked Crowne Plaza for making them a part of their "Giving for Good" month.

"We're so appreciative of Crowne Plaza for their generosity and we hope that we will continue to do this for our seniors and build partnership. With that said, we just want to say thank you."

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Senior citizens at the Man'Amko Center sit as Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan staff prepare to serve a special lunch for them Monday at the Office of Aging in Garapan.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Crowne Plaza brought smiles and a special lunch for the *man'amkos* at the Office of Aging in Garapan yesterday.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan chef Zen Tomakane was front and center in serving the island's elderly.

Carmakers and United Auto Workers talking

By DAVID KOENIG
AP BUSINESS WRITER

The United Auto Workers and Detroit's Big Three carmakers resumed talks aimed at ending a strike now in its fourth day, and under the threat that the walkout could soon spread.

Stellantis said it resumed negotiations with the union Monday and described the talks as "constructive." A spokesman for General Motors said representatives of the company and the United Auto Workers also were continuing to negotiate.

However, UAW President Shawn Fain said on NPR, "We have a long way to go," and if the companies don't respond to the union's demands, "then we will escalate action."

In a video statement late Monday, Fain said more factories could be targeted if "serious progress" toward an agreement isn't reached by Friday at noon.

"We're not messing around," he said.

So far, the strike is limited to about 13,000 workers at three factories—one each at GM, Ford and Stellantis, the successor to Fiat Chrysler.

However, the union's strategy hinges on its ability to escalate the strike quickly, and the carmakers are warning of potential layoffs as the limited strike reduces the amount of material needed at plants that remain open.

GM said Monday that 2,000 UAW-represented workers at an assembly plant in Kansas City are "expected to be idled as soon as early this week" because of a shortage of supplies from a GM plant near St. Louis, where workers walked off the job Friday.

Workers at the Kansas City plant build the Chevrolet Malibu and Cadillac XT4.

The strike could begin to affect suppliers and their employees too. CIE Newcor told Michigan officials that it expects a one-month closure of four plants in the state to start Oct. 2 and idle nearly 300 workers.

In a sign of concern of the strike's potential economic and political fallout, the Biden administration stepped up its response.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said she is hoping for a quick resolution, while adding that is too soon to gauge the strike's impact.

"It's premature to be making forecasts about what it means for the economy. It would depend on how long the strike lasts and who would be affected by it," she said on CNBC.

Yellen said labor activism this year—strikes by Hollywood writers and actors, by workers at about 150 Starbucks locations and walkouts that were narrowly averted at United Parcel Service and West Coast ports—has been driven by a strong labor market and high demand for workers.

President Joe Biden is sending two top administration officials to Detroit to meet with both sides. Biden has backed the UAW in brief public comments, saying that the automakers have not fairly shared their record profits with workers.

Federal Reserve poised to leave rates unchanged

WASHINGTON (AP)—Since Federal Reserve officials last met in July, the economy has moved in the direction they hoped to see: Inflation continues to ease, if more slowly than most Americans would like, while growth remains solid and the job market cools.

When they meet again this week, the policymakers are likely to decide they can afford to wait and see if the progress continues. As a result, they're almost sure to leave their key interest rate unchanged when their meeting ends Wednesday.

The cooling of inflation suggests that the Fed is edging toward a peak in the series of rate hikes it unleashed in March of last year—the fastest such pace in four decades, one that has made borrowing much costlier for consumers and businesses.

The focus for Wall Street investors and analysts now is shifting toward what comes next. Some clues could come in the updated interest rate projections it releases each quarter and at a news conference with Chair Jerome Powell.

Another rate hike this year will likely remain on the table, and Fed officials may project fewer cuts in their key rate next year than they did in June. This would underscore the Fed's determination to keep rates elevated well into next year as it strives to get inflation down to its 2% target.

Inflation pressures showed signs of persistence in two government reports last week, adding some uncertainty to the outlook. Claudia Sahm, a former Fed economist, said she thinks a "soft landing," in which the Fed manages to curb inflation without causing a recession, remains possible. But she cautioned that inflation might stay higher for longer than the central bank expects. Or, she suggested, the cumulative effects of the Fed's 11 rate hikes could ultimately tip the economy into recession.

"We are at a point where things could plausibly go in a lot of different directions," Sahm said. "They're going to react as it unfolds."

Still, most economic data in the past two months has pointed in a positive direction. Inflation in June and July, excluding volatile food and energy prices, posted its two lowest monthly readings in nearly two years.

Nation

Five Americans detained in Iran walk free

» Released in deal for frozen Iranian assets

AP

From left, Morad Tahbaz, Siamak Namazi, and Emad Sharghi walk away arm in arm from a Qatar Airways flight that brought them out of Tehran and to Doha, Qatar, Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

DOHA, Qatar (AP)—Five Americans detained for years in Iran walked off a plane and into freedom Monday, most arm-in-arm, as part of a politically risky deal that saw President Joe Biden agree to the release of nearly $6 billion in frozen Iranian assets owed by a third country, South Korea.

The successful negotiations for the Americans' freedom brought Biden profuse thanks from their families but heat from Republican presidential rivals and other opponents for the monetary arrangement with one of America's top adversaries.

"Today, five innocent Americans who were imprisoned in Iran are finally coming home," Biden said in a statement released as the plane carrying the group from Tehran landed in Doha, Qatar. A plane carrying the Americans home to the United States was due to land Monday night.

Iran's hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, on hand for the United Nations General Assembly in New York, suggested Monday's exchange could be "a step in the direction of a humanitarian action between us and America."

"It can definitely help in building trust," Raisi told journalists.

However, tensions are almost certain to remain high between the U.S. and Iran, which are locked in disputes over Tehran's nuclear program and other matters. Iran says the program is peaceful, but it now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

The prisoner release unfolded amid a major American military buildup in the Persian Gulf, with the possibility of U.S. troops boarding and guarding commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all oil shipments pass.

After the plane slowed to a stop in Doha, three of the prisoners walked down the stairs. They hugged the U.S. ambassador to Qatar, Timmy Davis, and others.

The three—Siamak Namazi, Emad Sharghi and Morad Tahbaz—then threw their arms over one another's shoulders and walked off to a building in the airport.

In a statement issued on his behalf, Namazi said: "I would not be free today, if it wasn't for all of you who didn't allow the world to forget me."

"Thank you for being my voice when I could not speak for myself and for making sure I was heard when I mustered the strength to scream from behind the impenetrable walls of Evin Prison," he said.

The United States did not immediately identify the other two freed Americans, all of whom were released in exchange for five Iranians in U.S. custody and for the deal over the frozen Iranian assets. The Biden administration said the five freed Iranians pose no threat to U.S. national security.

Two of the imprisoned Americans' family members, Effie Namazi and Vida Tahbaz, who had been under travel bans in Iran, also were on the plane. The women, too, clasped arms and kissed on the tarmac in Qatar.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said two of the Iranian prisoners will stay in the U.S. Meanwhile, Nour News, a website believed to be close to Iran's security apparatus, said two of the Iranian prisoners were in Doha for the swap.

Nour News identified the two released Iranians in Doha as Mehrdad Ansari, an Iranian sentenced by the U.S. to 63 months in prison in 2021 for obtaining equipment that could be used in missiles, electronic warfare, nuclear weapons and other military gear, and Reza Sarhangpour Kafrani, an Iranian charged in 2021 over allegedly unlawfully exporting laboratory equipment to Iran.

The $5.9 billion in cash released to Iran represents money South Korea owed Iran—but had not yet paid—for oil purchased before the U.S. imposed sanctions on such transactions in 2019.

The U.S. maintains that, once in Qatar, the money will be held in restricted accounts to be used only for humanitarian goods, such as medicine and food. Those transactions are currently allowed under American sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic over its advancing nuclear program.

Iranian government officials have largely concurred, though some hard-liners have insisted, without evidence, that there would be no restrictions on how Tehran spends the money.

The planned exchange comes ahead of the convening of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly this week in New York, where Raisi will speak.

The deal has already opened Biden to fresh criticism from Republicans and others who say the administration is helping boost the Iranian economy at a time when Iran poses a growing threat to American troops and Mideast allies. That could have implications in his re-election campaign.

Hawaii officials say DNA tests drop Maui fire death count to 97

WAILUKU, Hawaii (AP)—Authorities in Hawaii have adjusted the number of deaths from the deadly Maui wildfire down to at least 97 people.

Officials previously said they believed at least 115 people had died in the fire, but further testing showed they had multiple DNA samples from some of the victims. The number of those who are missing also fell from 41 to 31, Maui Police Chief John Pelletier said.

John Byrd, laboratory director with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, said during a news conference Friday afternoon that the current number of dead should be considered a minimum, because it's possible that toll could rise.

Determining the death toll from the Aug. 8 wildfire in Lahaina has been especially complicated because of the damage caused by the fire and the chaos as people tried to escape, officials said. In some cases, animal remains were inadvertently collected along with human remains.

So far, 74 of the deceased have been positively identified, Pelletier said.

The Lahaina fire is the deadliest wildfire in the U.S. in more than a century. Caught in a hellscape, some residents died in their cars, while others jumped into the ocean or tried to run for safety. The blaze reduced much of the historic town to ash.

"When the fire broke out, people ran together, they huddled together," said Dr. Jeremy Stuelpnagel, Maui County physician's coroner. "They're holding each other in those moments. Some of them were even holding pets." Because of this, some remains arrived commingled.

Byrd said the initial death tally was too high for several reasons, adding that the lower tally now was the "normal and natural" progression of the long-term forensics investigation.

"We look at body bags that come in and we do an initial inventory and we assess how many people are represented there," he said. "When you do the first tally of all those that have come in, the number tends to be too high because as you begin to do more analysis and examination you realize that actually you've got two bags that were the same person or you have two bags that were the same two people but you didn't realize that."

"The numbers start a little too high on the morgue side and eventually settles until at some point it's going to be a final accurate number. I would say we're not quite there yet," Byrd said.

Only people who have had a missing person report filed for them with the Maui Police Department are on the verified missing list, Pelletier said. If a missing person report hasn't been filed for someone more than five weeks after the fire, then that person probably isn't actually missing, the chief said.

Stuelpnagel wasn't supposed to start in his new role until October. But he sped up his start date and arrived on Maui from New York City soon after the fire. Until he arrived, Maui's medical examiner duties were shared with other counties.

"When this happened it was time to drop everything and come here," he said.

Stuelpnagel said people working on the identification process are trying to "reunify people to have them as whole as they're able to be," before the remains are returned to their loved ones.

The work to reunite fire victims with families involves more than just DNA tests, officials said. Anthropologists are assisting, and officials are gathering clues from dental work and medical devices like pacemakers when possible.

Authorities expressed relief at having a better grasp on the number of dead and those still unaccounted for in the wildfire.

McCarthy is running out of options to stop shutdown as conservatives balk at new plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—Speaker Kevin McCarthy was running out of options Monday as he pushed ahead with a plan to keep the federal government from shutting down, but even including hardline border security provisions wasn't enough to appease the far-right flank in his Republican House majority.

The speaker is trying to convince his Republican conference that there will heavy political fallout from a shutdown as he plows toward a vote to pass a stopgap measure, called a continuing resolution, that would keep government offices open past the Sept. 30 deadline. GOP leadership is preparing for a vote by Thursday, but McCarthy is warning he'll keep House lawmakers in Washington into the weekend. Regardless, many are already bracing for a weeks-long shutdown.

"I've told all of Congress you're not going to go home. We're going to continue to work through this," McCarthy said Monday at the Capitol. "Things that are tough sometimes are worth it."

He also suggested that time is still on his side and panned the idea of compromising with Democrats as he tries to pass the annual spending measures on his own, saying there were "a lot of good ideas" still coming from Republicans.

"This isn't the 30th—we've got a long ways to go," he said.

There is also no hope of passing all of the appropriations bills on Congress' agenda before then. Even a Defense appropriations bill—usually an easy lift with Republicans—has stalled in the House as they resist more money for Ukraine.

The speaker on a Sunday night call with House Republicans pitched the one-month funding bill that was negotiated between the hard-right House Freedom Caucus and a group of pragmatic-minded conservatives known as the Main Street Caucus, according to those with knowledge of the call.

McCarthy called the package a "bottom-up" approach. It was intended to win support from the conservative wing of the Republican Conference by cutting last year's overall spending levels by 1%, and including a slew of Republican proposals for border security and immigration. But in order to protect current spending levels for Republican priorities of defense, veterans and disaster relief, it slashes other spending by more than 8%.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer in a floor speech said the proposal from the House "can be boiled down to two words: slapdash, reckless."

"Slapdash, because it's not a serious proposal for avoiding a shutdown, and reckless because if passed would cause immense harm to so many priorities that help the American people," he said.

With the Senate controlled by Democrats who, along with some Republicans, will not accept the conservative options, the best hope McCarthy has at this point is to simply pass a measure to kickstart debate with the other chamber. But even that route is doubtful with time dwindling and McCarthy struggling to push his conference to avert a shutdown.

Asia

Canada expels Indian diplomat

NEW DELHI (AP)—Canada expelled a top Indian diplomat as it investigates what Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called credible allegations its government may have had links to the assassination in Canada of a Sikh activist, an accusation that India rejected as "absurd."

» As it investigates a Sikh's killing

Trudeau said in Parliament on Monday that Canadian intelligence agencies have been looking into the allegations after Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a strong supporter of an independent Sikh homeland known as Khalistan, was gunned down on June 18 outside a Sikh cultural center in Surrey, British Columbia.

Trudeau told Parliament that he brought up the slaying with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Group of 20 summit last week in New Delhi. He said he told Modi that any Indian government involvement would be unacceptable and that he asked for cooperation in the investigation.

Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly said the head of Indian intelligence in Canada has been expelled as a consequence.

"If proven true this would be a great violation of our sovereignty and of the most basic rule of how countries deal with each other," Joly said. "As a consequence we have expelled a top Indian diplomat."

India's foreign ministry dismissed the allegation of government involvement as "absurd and motivated." The ministry's statement Tuesday added that Trudeau made similar allegations to Modi at the G20 summit.

"Such unsubstantiated allegations seek to shift the focus from Khalistani terrorists and extremists, who have been provided shelter in Canada and continue to threaten India's sovereignty and territorial integrity," the statement noted, referring to a separatist movement India regards as a security threat.

The expulsion comes as relations between Canada and India are tense. Trade talks have been derailed and Canada just canceled a trade mission to India that was planned for the fall.

During a meeting with Trudeau at the G20 summit, Modi expressed "strong concerns" over Canada's handling of the Punjabi independence movement among overseas Sikhs, according to India's Ministry of External Affairs.

The statement described the Sikh movement as "promoting secessionism and inciting violence" against Indian diplomats. It called on Canada to work with India on what New Delhi said is a threat to the Canadian Indian diaspora.

Canada has a Sikh population of more than 770,000, or about 2% of its total population.

"Over the past number of weeks Canadian security agencies have been actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar," Trudeau said.

Trudeau said Canada has declared its deep concerns to the Indian government. "Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty."

Trudeau said his government has been working closely and coordinating with Canada's allies on the case.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Blinken meets Chinese VP as US-China contacts increase ahead of possible summit

NEW YORK (AP)—Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Monday with China's vice president on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly as the Biden administration and Beijing step up high-level contacts ahead of what could be a leader-level summit this fall. Blinken and Vice President Han Zheng held talks Monday at the Chinese mission to the United Nations. Their discussion came as China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi was in Moscow meeting Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov after wrapping up two days of talks with U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan in Malta. The quick succession of U.S.-China contacts is fueling speculation that President Joe Biden may meet his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in November at an Asia-Pacific Economic conference in San Francisco. "I think it's a good thing that we have this opportunity to build on the recent high-level engagements that our countries have had to make sure that we're maintaining open communications and demonstrate that we are responsibly managing the relationship between our two countries," Blinken said in brief remarks at the top of the meeting.

Thousands of S. Korean teachers rallying for new laws to protect them from abusive parents

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Thousands of South Korean school teachers and staff rallied in Seoul on Saturday for more legal protection from bullying by parents, a rising problem in a country known for its brutally competitive school environments. The weekend demonstrations in the capital city, were triggered by the death of a teacher who was found dead at her elementary school in July after reportedly expressing emotional distress caused by complaints from allegedly abusive parents. The protesting teachers, who have rallied for weeks, say current laws make it difficult to exercise control over their classrooms and leave them at the mercy of overbearing parents, who could easily accuse them of emotionally abusing children. South Korean lawmakers are currently debating bills that would meet some of the teachers' demands to for immunity from child abuse claims. But some experts have raised concerns over the potential changes, saying the proposals could further weaken protection for children, who toil for years in hypercompetitive environments.

Protesters demand that Japan save 1000s of trees

TOKYO (AP)—Protesters in Tokyo formed a human chain Sunday to demand the government save thousands of trees by revising its plan to redevelop a popular downtown park. Demonstrators, many wearing green shirts and holding up signs saying, "Save Jingu Gaien," demanded the Education Ministry take action even though the landowner is one of its agencies. Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike approved the plan in February, a move that would allow developers—real estate company Mitsui Fudosan, Meiji Jingu shrine, Itochu Corp. and the ministry-affiliate Japan Sports Council—to build a pair of 200-meter (650-foot) skyscrapers and an 80-meter (260-foot) tower. That would require cutting down nearly 3,000 trees at Jingu Gaien, one of Tokyo's most historic and beloved green areas. The plan would also raze and rebuild a historic baseball stadium where Babe Ruth played and change a rugby field to one with artificial grass.

World

HEADING FOR UN

Zelenskyy questions why Russia still has place there

AP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits with wounded Ukrainian soldiers at Staten Island University Hospital, in New York, Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

NEW YORK (AP)—Days before potentially crossing paths with Russia's top diplomat at the United Nations, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy suggested Monday that the world body needs to answer for allowing his country's invader a seat at the tables of power.

"For us, it's very important that all our words, all our messages, will be heard by our partners. And if in the United Nations still—it's a pity, but still—there is a place for Russian terrorists, the question is not to me. I think it's a question to all the members of the United Nations," Zelenskyy said after visiting wounded Ukrainian military members at a New York hospital.

He had just arrived in the U.S. to make his country's case to the world and to Washington for continued help in trying to repel Russia's invasion, nearly 19 months into what has become a grinding war.

Ukraine's Western allies have supplied weapons and other assistance, and the U.S. Congress is currently weighing President Joe Biden's request to provide as much as $24 billion more in military and humanitarian aid.

U.S. lawmakers are increasingly divided over providing additional money to Ukraine. Zelenskyy is scheduled to spend some time Thursday on Capitol Hill and meet with Biden at the White House.

Before that, Zelenskyy is due to address world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday and speak Wednesday at a U.N. Security Council meeting about Ukraine. Russia is a permanent, veto-wielding member of the council, and Foreign Minister Minister Sergey Lavrov is expected to make remarks.

Asked whether he'd stay in the room to listen, Zelenskyy said, "I don't know how it will be, really."

UN: Disease outbreak in Libya's flooded east can spark 'second devastating crisis'

DERNA, Libya (AP)—Officials warned Monday that a disease outbreak in Libya's northeast, where floods have killed thousands, could create "a second devastating crisis" as adults and children fell ill from contaminated water.

In a statement, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya said it was particularly concerned about water contamination and the lack of sanitation after two dams collapsed during Mediterranean storm Daniel, sending a wall of water gushing through the eastern city of Derna on Sept. 11. The death toll has varied, with government officials and aid agencies giving tallies ranging from about 4,000 to 11,000 dead.

Nine U.N. agencies responding to the disaster are working to prevent diseases from taking hold and creating another crisis in the devasted country, which is receiving 28 tons (25 metric tonnes) of medical supplies from the World Health Organization, the mission said.

Haider al-Saeih, head of Libya's Center for Combating Diseases, said in televised comments Saturday that at least 150 people — 55 of them children — suffered diarrhea after drinking contaminated water in Derna.

The disaster has brought some rare unity to oil-rich Libya, which has been divided between rival administrations since 2014. Both are backed by international patrons and armed militias whose influence in the country has ballooned since a NATO-backed Arab Spring uprising toppled autocratic ruler Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

The opposing governments have both deployed humanitarian teams to the port city and other affected areas, but poor coordination, difficulty getting aid to the hardest-hit areas and the destruction of Derna's infrastructure, including several bridges, have hampered their efforts.

On Monday, protesters gathered outside the al-Shabana mosque in central Derna, in a show of anger against authorities.

Hundreds of Libyan men gathered outside, and atop, the mosque before a man read a list of demands at the building's entrance. The man called on authorities to expedite their investigation into the disaster, for the U.N to set up an office in Derna, for urgent reconstruction of the city and for compensation for those affected by the flood. After he finished, the hundreds gathered began chanting: "Libya, Libya, Libya."

Good Housekeeping

Style at Home: Designing breathtaking tablescapes for fall gatherings

By KATIE LAUGHRIDGE
Tribune News Service

Apart from being close to many people I love, having four distinct seasons is one of the things I appreciate most about living in the Midwest. I'm more than ready to bid adieu to the steamy summer and move on to cooler temps!

In celebration of the season, we've dressed up our tables to highlight fall colors and textures. Let me walk you through some of my favorites!

PHOTOS BY TNS

This tablescape nods to Halloween while celebrating autumn.

A neutral beauty

At this fall table, muted neutrals and metallic shades take charge, creating a soothing and inviting ambiance that is perfect for intimate gatherings or family feasts.

At the heart of the tablescape, a grouping of three risers elevates the centerpiece, featuring a harmonious blend of pumpkins and pheasants at varying heights. The focal point is a stunning vase brimming with autumnal blooms in deep reds and creams and hues of orange, evoking the warmth of the season's palette.

Soup tureens resembling whimsical pumpkins are thoughtfully placed. The silverware brings a touch of opulence with gold accents, beautifully mirroring the smaller gold accent pieces subtly woven into the centerpiece.

Sip in style with stemware that embraces the earthy tones that define this time of year. White and green china come to life with the addition of a pheasant plate adorned with a mesmerizing orange and gold pheasant motif.

Anchoring the entire composition, crisp white linens and a refined white table runner provide a clean backdrop, allowing the intricate elements to shine. The resulting motif exudes a sense of natural grace and elegance.

A gilded deer adds to the rustic beauty of this tablescape celebration of the fall season.

An autumnal harvest

Awash in the harmonious hues of browns and oranges, complemented by lavish gold accents, this table setting exudes a sense of opulence and comfort.

The centerpiece commands attention with two large floral displays rising at varying heights. Bursting with sunflowers, autumn leaves, pine cones and crabapples, these arrangements infuse the scene with the earthy essence of fall. Nestled beneath one of these displays, a gilded deer figurine adds a touch of woodland charm.

Gold candelabras stand tall, casting a soft glow that enhances the inviting ambiance. A playful dance of pumpkins in various sizes and shapes run through the center of the table, seamlessly mingling with the floral displays to create a captivating focal point.

Each place setting continues to weave the theme of luxury and rustic beauty. Brown and white china featuring a woodland pattern rests atop brown place mats adorned with rustic yet dainty ruffles, marrying sophistication with a touch of the countryside.

As the pièce de résistance, velvet pumpkins spill out of delicate soup tureens at each place setting. The stemware, with its elegant gold rim, harmoniously connects the table's design elements, uniting the delicate touches with the golden opulence of the centerpieces.

Subtle Halloween charm

Step into the realm of seasonal enchantment with our final captivating tablescape, where the interplay of black and orange hues orchestrates a symphony of autumnal beauty. Effortlessly transitioning between Halloween and the full splendor of fall, this arrangement invites both delight and warmth to your gatherings.

A central orange riser, a small accent table, takes its place as the heart of the table. Atop it, a captivating black and white vase brimming with blooms takes center stage. With shades of deep red and fiery orange, these flowers exude the essence of the season's vibrant palette.

Candelabras adorned with orange candles are thoughtfully scattered across the table, their soft glow casting an enchanting ambiance that brings the design to life. Nestled within the centerpiece, glass pumpkins and cement turkeys create a playful yet sophisticated tableau, capturing the essence of both Halloween and the broader autumn aesthetic.

Dishes playfully mingle in stacks, with an amber riser offering elevation to a plate crowned by a delightful stack of dishes. The napkins, adorned with a plaid pattern, add a touch of rustic elegance, while the buffalo check tablecloth sets the stage for a cozy and inviting atmosphere.

Amber-colored stemware and creamy white dishes harmonize perfectly, showcasing the thoughtfully curated palette that dances between black and orange. This tablescape invites you and your guests to revel in the magic of autumn's allure.

An elegant table is set with beautiful neutral tones, flanked by sleek gray dining chairs.

A colorful pheasant adds a playful touch to an otherwise traditional stack of dishes.

These carefully crafted arrangements showcase the versatility of seasonal decor, from the muted elegance of neutrals and metallics to the bold embrace of oranges and browns. We hope these inspiring designs help set the table for your own fall gatherings.

Adapted from nellhills.com. Katie Laughridge is the owner of Kansas City interior design destination Nell Hill's. For more information, contact Katie at info@nellhills.com.

Life & Style

Marilyn Manson pleads no contest to blowing nose on videographer

LACONIA, N.H. (AP)—Marilyn Manson was sentenced to 20 hours of community service and a fine on Monday after pleading no contest to blowing his nose on a videographer at a 2019 concert in New Hampshire.

The shock rocker, 54, wanted to appear via video for his hearing on the misdemeanor charge, but the judge required him to be in the courtroom in Laconia, about 30 miles north of Concord, the state capital.

Manson, whose legal name is Brian Warner, was charged with two misdemeanor counts of simple assault stemming from the encounter with the videographer at the Bank of New Hampshire Pavilion in Gilford on Aug. 19, 2019.

Manson pleaded no contest to just the nose-blowing charge in a fully negotiated plea agreement with prosecutors. The prosecutors agreed to dismiss the other charge, which alleged that he spit on the videographer. A no contest plea means Manson is not contesting the charge and does not admit guilt.

Manson was fined a little more than $1,400 as part of the deal, with $200 suspended. He needs to remain arrest-free and notify local police of any New Hampshire performances for two years.

AP

Musical artist Marilyn Manson, whose legal name is Brian Hugh Warner, leaves after appearing in Belknap Superior Court,Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, in Laconia, N.H.

The judge, who called Manson's acts "egregious," agreed to allow Manson to do his community service in California. Manson mentioned to reporters that he might choose to work with people in recovery. He has to give proof of his community service by Feb. 4.

According to a police affidavit, Manson approached videographer Susan Fountain in the venue's stage pit area, put his face close to her camera and spit a "big lougee" at her. She was struck on both hands with saliva. He approached her again later, kneeling and covering one nostril before blowing the other on her arms and hands.

Manson "blows a significant amount of mucous at Fountain," a police sergeant who reviewed concert video footage said in the affidavit. After that, the camera view changes and people can see Manson "point and laugh at Fountain as she gets down and walks away," the affidavit said.

After that, the camera view changes to another one and people can see Manson "point and laugh" etc.

Fountain was not in court, but submitted a statement that was read aloud.

"For me, I'm a professional person and I've been in this industry for 30 years. I've worked for a lot of companies, and in all the years I've worked with people, I've never been humiliated or treated the way I was by this defendant," it read. "For him to spit on me and blow his nose on me was the most disgusting thing a human being has ever done.

Bill Maher postpones return to the air

NEW YORK (AP)—Bill Maher has delayed returning to his HBO talk show during the ongoing strike by writers and actors, a decision that follows similar pauses over the weekend by "The Drew Barrymore Show," "The Talk" and "The Jennifer Hudson Show."

Maher

Maher last week said he would bring his show back into production, but on Monday said he'll wait because talks are scheduled to begin between producers and writers on Wednesday.

"My decision to return to work was made when it seemed nothing was happening and there was no end in sight to this strike," Maher said via social media. "Now that both sides have agreed to go back to the negotiating table I'm going to delay the return of 'Real Time,' for now, and hope they can finally get this done."

Barrymore, who drew criticism for taping new episodes of her daytime talk show despite the ongoing writers and actors strikes, said Sunday she'll wait until the labor issues are resolved.

"I have listened to everyone, and I am making the decision to pause the show's premiere until the strike is over," Barrymore posted on Instagram on Sunday. "I have no words to express my deepest apologies to anyone I have hurt and, of course, to our incredible team who works on the show and has made it what it is today."

Talk shows are covered under a separate labor contract—the so-called Network Code—from the one actors and writers are striking. The Network Code also covers reality TV, sports, morning news shows, soap operas and game shows.

Remaining dates on Russell Brand's tour postponed after sexual assault allegations

LONDON (AP)—British police said Monday that they had received a sexual assault allegation after media outlets published claims by several women against Russell Brand. Promoters postponed the remaining dates in a string of live gigs by the comedian, who denies the allegations.

A talent agency and a publisher also parted company with Brand over the claims, which have left the U.K. entertainment industry facing questions about whether the comedian's bad behavior went unchallenged because of his fame.

Brand, 48, denies allegations of sexual assault made by four women in a Channel 4 television documentary and The Times and Sunday Times newspapers. The accusers, who have not been named, include one who said she was sexually assaulted during a relationship with him when she was 16. Another woman says Brand raped her in Los Angeles in 2012.

AP

Russell Brand leaves the Troubabour Wembley Park theater in northwest London after performing a comedy set on Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023.

London's Metropolitan Police force said that since the allegations were made public it had received "a report of a sexual assault which was alleged to have taken place in Soho in central London in 2003." That is three years before the earliest of the alleged assaults reported by the media outlets.

The police force said "officers are in contact with the woman and will be providing her with support." It did not identify the alleged perpetrator as Brand, but referred to the newspaper and TV allegations in its statement. Police urged "anyone who believes they may have been a victim of a sexual offence, no matter how long ago it was, to contact us."

In a video statement released Friday in response to the media claims, Brand said that his relationships were "always consensual."

The Times said Monday that more women had contacted the newspaper with allegations against Brand and they would be "rigorously checked."

Fiance's co-worker puts on a show

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I went to his co-worker "Tina's" house on a Friday night to socialize and play trivia games. We had been at her place before, for a Christmas party. Tina wore a short skirt, and when she sat down you could see all the way up to her black lace panties. During our "heads-up" game she sat right across from my fiance. While people were laughing and having fun drinking and playing games, all I could notice were her panties and Tina's loud laughs. She was drinking, and my fiance asked her, "Baby, are you feeling OK?" He said it loudly. Everyone heard it, and I felt myself getting really angry and red in the face. Why was he calling her Baby? We call each other that!

I don't want to return to Tina's house. My fiance says I overreacted. He doesn't tell me about his goings-on at work or about friend hangouts. We usually go out together alone. When I think back on that night, I still feel upset about it. Are my feelings valid? Do you think we need couples therapy before we get married?

UNEASY IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR UNEASY: Allow me to save you some money. Rather than tell your fiance you think you need couples counseling because his co-worker drinks too much, say instead you were not impressed by the performance Tina put on that evening, and you prefer the two of you skip game nights at her place and socialize with people with whom you have more in common.

■■■

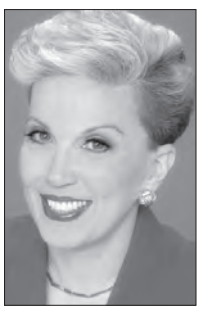
DEAR ABBY: My mother is still married to the man who molested my siblings and me. How do I forgive her and move past it? We had a close mother-daughter relationship until two years ago, when I asked her why she was still married to the man her children told her repeatedly had molested them. She didn't answer. She chose him, walked out and we haven't spoken since. It's hard for me to deal with. I don't understand, and I don't know how to get past it. Not having your mother because she passes away is hard, but the feeling of not having her while she's alive is a whole different kind of pain.

FULL OF PAIN IN TEXAS

DEAR FULL OF PAIN: In my opinion, not all sins are forgivable. Chief among them is turning a blind eye to children who are being sexually abused. Your mother made her choice years ago, and I can only imagine how hurtful it has been for you. An organization called R.A.I.N.N. (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network) may be helpful because it can connect you with experienced therapists. (The website is rainn.org.)

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

The man to whom your mother has given her allegiance is a danger to the community. If he would abuse you and your siblings, he would have no compunction about doing it to other children given the opportunity. You (and your siblings) should notify the police about what happened to you because it could happen over and over again.

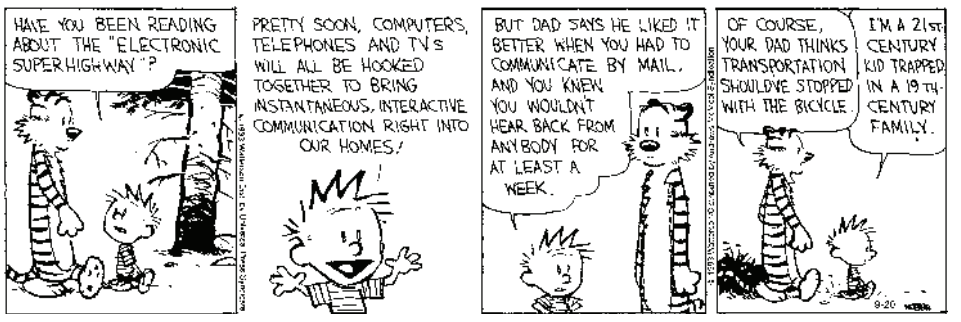
■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

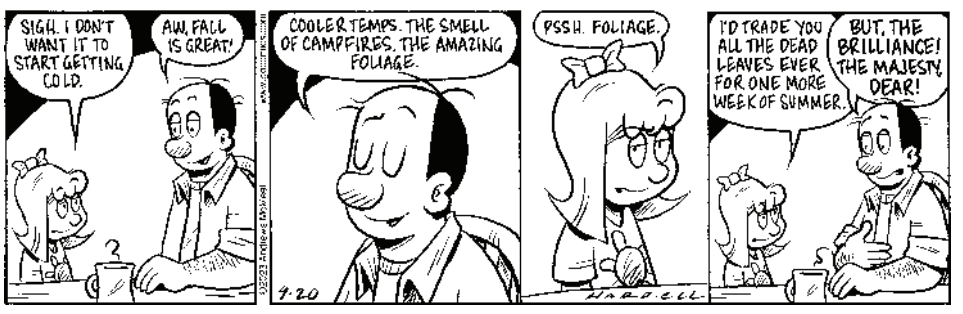

HAVE YOU BEEN READING ABOUT THE "ELECTRONIC SUPERHIGHWAY"?
PRETTY SOON, COMPUTERS, TELEPHONES AND TV'S WILL ALL BE HOOKED TOGETHER TO BRING INSTANTANEOUS, INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION RIGHT INTO OUR HOMES!
BUT DAD SAYS HE LIKED IT BETTER WHEN YOU HAD TO COMMUNICATE BY MAIL. AND YOU KNEW YOU WOULDN'T HEAR BACK FROM ANYBODY FOR AT LEAST A WEEK.
OF COURSE, YOUR DAD THINKS TRANSPORTATION SHOULDVE STOPPED WITH THE BICYCLE
I'M A 21ST CENTURY KID TRAPPED IN A 19TH-CENTURY FAMILY.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SIGH. I DON'T WANT IT TO START GETTING COLD.
AW, FALL IS GREAT!
COOLER TEMPS. THE SMELL OF CAMPFIRES. THE AMAZING FOLIAGE.
PSSH. FOLIAGE.
I'D TRADE YOU ALL THE DEAD LEAVES EVER FOR ONE MORE WEEK OF SUMMER.
BUT, THE BRILLIANCE! THE MAJESTY, DEAR!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOUR HONOR, HOW MANY DAYS SERVING AS JURY FOREMAN QUALIFY ME TO BE A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE?
YOU'LL NEVER BE QUALIFIED, DUMBO!
MY FIRST LANDMARK CASE WILL BE 'CAMINO V. CRABBY OLD JURY LADY.'

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Felonious flights
5 Wrestling surface
8 Historic Scott
12 Composer Satie
13 Coach Parseghian
14 Used a loom
15 Science of heredity
17 Israel's Abba
18 "Sexy" Beatles girl
19 Beauty parlors
21 Tennis barriers
24 Hairy Addams cousin
25 Low range
28 October stone
30 British verb ending
33 Antlered grazer
34 Russian range
35 When doubled, it's a dance
36 — kwon do
37 Postpaid enc.
38 Jacob's twin
39 "Frontline" airer
41 Roman 1109
43 Supplies food for
46 Untamed
50 Landed
51 Delicate dinner party topic
54 Mythical birds
55 Vitamin stat
56 Jazz singer James
57 Booked solid
58 "Certainly!"
59 Take it easy

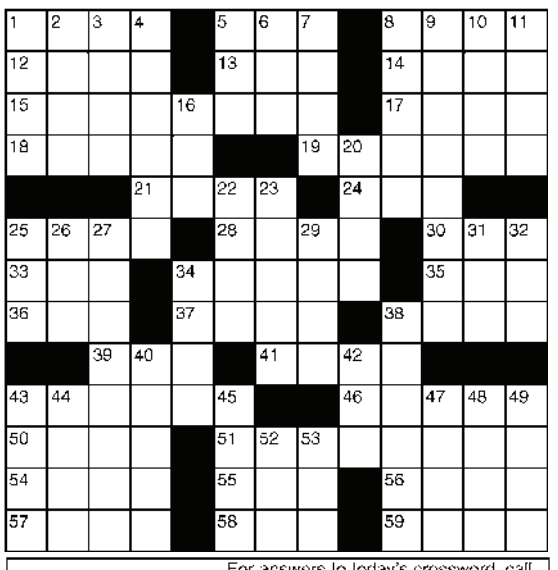
DOWN

1 Staying power
2 Region
3 Behave
4 Yarn bundles
5 Avril follower
6 Joan of —
7 Cold War news agency
8 Resided
9 Technology relating to automatons
10 Author Hunter
11 Lairs
16 Golf prop
20 Has a bug
22 Afghanistan's — Bora region
23 Tic
25 Wager
26 Pie — mode
27 Doubters
29 Mr. Guinness
31 — Na Na
32 Water (Fr.)
34 Cold War initials
38 New Hampshire town
40 Flag maker Ross
42 "— Were a Rich Man"
43 Keto restriction
44 Matty of baseball
45 Agile
47 Bar mitzvah, e.g.
48 Play parts
49 Aspiring atty.'s exam
52 Poetic tribute
53 Scale notes

Solution time: 23 mins.

M	I	N	I	■	A	B	S	■	A	L	L	S
R	O	O	T	■	V	A	C	■	R	E	A	P
T	U	N	A	F	I	S	H	■	F	A	V	A
■	■	■	L	E	D	■	O	M	A	H	A	N
C	O	K	I	E	■	M	O	O	R	■	■	■
U	S	N	A	■	T	O	L	L	F	R	E	E
R	H	O	■	C	E	D	E	D	■	E	A	R
I	A	X	I	H	A	U	D	■	S	A	R	A
■	■	■	R	A	M	S	■	P	U	M	P	S
S	C	R	U	B	S	■	O	I	L	■	■	■
O	L	E	G	■	T	A	K	E	F	I	V	E
L	A	N	A	■	E	V	A	■	U	R	A	L
O	P	E	L	■	R	A	Y	■	R	E	N	D

Yesterday's answer 9-20



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Phillip Phillips, 33; Kristen Johnston, 56; Gary Cole, 67; Sophia Loren, 89.

Happy Birthday: A positive change will help you fulfill your dreams. Get on the information highway and discover what's possible. Add to your skills, knowledge and insight by looking into what's trending. You'll be a step ahead of the competition. Use this year to broaden your scope and find your niche. Participate in life instead of watching it pass you by. Make health a priority. Your numbers are 6, 10, 24, 29, 35, 41, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Socializing will offer an intro to someone who can show you a diverse way to use your skills to get what you want. Get whatever you agree to in writing to avoid fighting for what you want when it's too late. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Keep busy, finish what you start and initiate a change that helps you gain momentum in your race to the top. An open mind and compassionate heart will be your passage to new beginnings and openings perfect for the skills and qualifications you offer. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Domestic, professional and relationship issues are priorities. Maintain a positive and flexible dialogue to avoid confusion and disappointment. Keep up with the changes around you, and don't feel obligated to follow the crowd. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A challenge is apparent and must be dealt with gracefully and with dignity. Put positive energy into the process and you'll have an impact on both participants and onlookers. Don't be afraid to be different; make a statement. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Keep life simple, drama-free and running smoothly. Now is not the time to cause upset or make costly or unnecessary changes. Make your health and well-being your focus and how you present yourself to the world a priority. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Check your availability before wasting time on something implausible. You may desire a change, but timing is crucial if you want to be successful. Get everything in order first and refuse to let your emotions lead the way when intelligence and reason are necessary. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Actions speak louder than words, and putting effort behind your promises will give you the necessary edge to impress people. Spend time with someone who lifts your spirits, excites your soul and is respectful when you say no to temptation. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Address serious issues directly. Don't let anyone negotiate on your behalf. You know what you need and want, and you can convince anyone you encounter to see things your way. Your aim to stabilize your personal or professional life will pan out. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Control is necessary to make things happen. Take the initiative to strengthen your connections to people with skills to help you reach your goal. Learn from the experience and treat similar situations with class, dignity and confidence. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Put a budget, project guidelines and an exercise routine in place, and it will improve your thinking, attitude and lifestyle. Organize your time strategically to avoid letting anger or stress work its way into encounters and conversations. Choose peace over friction. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Take a moment to clear your head and assess whatever situation you face. Don't feel the need to accommodate someone who asks for too much. Put your energy into what matters, and take care of unfinished business to alleviate stress. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Someone will use emotional manipulation to throw you off guard. You'll create a dilemma if you let your emotions clash with your responsibilities. Choose to do what's right, and clarify your position to anyone trying to take advantage of you. Avoid emotional spending. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are persistent, structured and detailed. You are sensitive and understated.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			4	8	7			
6		3				7		
		7				1		
1								9
3			9		6			
			8	7				3
	3		7					6
	6		5	9		4	1	8
	5	4		1	2			

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/20

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

8	3	9	5	7	2	4	1	6
2	1	7	3	4	6	8	9	5
6	4	5	9	1	8	3	2	7
9	5	8	7	2	3	1	6	4
4	6	2	8	5	1	9	7	3
3	7	1	4	6	9	2	5	8
1	2	3	6	8	5	7	4	9
5	8	4	1	9	7	6	3	2
7	9	6	2	3	4	5	8	1

Difficulty: ★★ 9/19

©2023 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

ACRYLIC DESIGNS Solution: 7 letters

M	I	N	I	M	A	L	T	N	E	I	D	A	R	G
S	A	L	O	N	O	O	T	R	A	C	L	E	L	L
T	R	N	C	E	E	L	B	R	A	M	T	O	S	I
A	C	E	I	L	N	L	A	V	O	A	S	R	T	T
M	I	S	K	C	A	F	I	N	E	S	A	E	E	T
P	L	W	E	C	U	S	D	W	Y	T	F	M	N	E
P	E	W	A	N	I	R	S	S	S	R	F	M	C	R
O	D	O	N	V	I	T	E	I	E	E	L	U	I	L
L	E	B	A	G	E	L	S	E	C	N	O	S	L	A
K	H	N	I	L	K	S	H	K	L	D	W	P	E	N
A	C	I	A	N	Q	A	N	R	T	K	E	I	T	O
D	Y	A	I	U	N	I	L	A	Y	O	R	T	S	S
O	S	R	A	D	T	C	A	R	T	S	B	A	A	A
T	P	R	E	D	W	O	P	O	L	I	S	H	P	E
S	E	I	R	R	E	H	C	U	T	I	C	L	E	S

©2023 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 9/20

Abstract, Almond, Cartoon, Cherries, Classic, Cuticles, Fine, Flower, Freehand, Gel, Glitter, Glossy, Gradient, Knit, Lines, Manicure, Marble, Minimal, Neon, Oval, Pastel, Polish, Polka Dots, Powder, Psychedelic, Rainbow, Royal, Salon, Seasonal, Sparkle, Sprinkles, Square, Stamp, Stars, Stencil, Stickers, Summer, Sweater, Tips, Trend, Waves

Yesterday's Answer: Baroque

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-856-232-2367)

Watt's scoop-and-score lifts Steelers past Browns, 26-22

PITTSBURGH (AP)—T.J. Watt scooped up a fumble by DeShaun Watson and ran 17 yards for the go-ahead touchdown midway through the fourth quarter, and the Pittsburgh Steelers beat the Cleveland Browns 26-22 on Monday night in a game overshadowed by a serious knee injury to Cleveland star running back Nick Chubb.

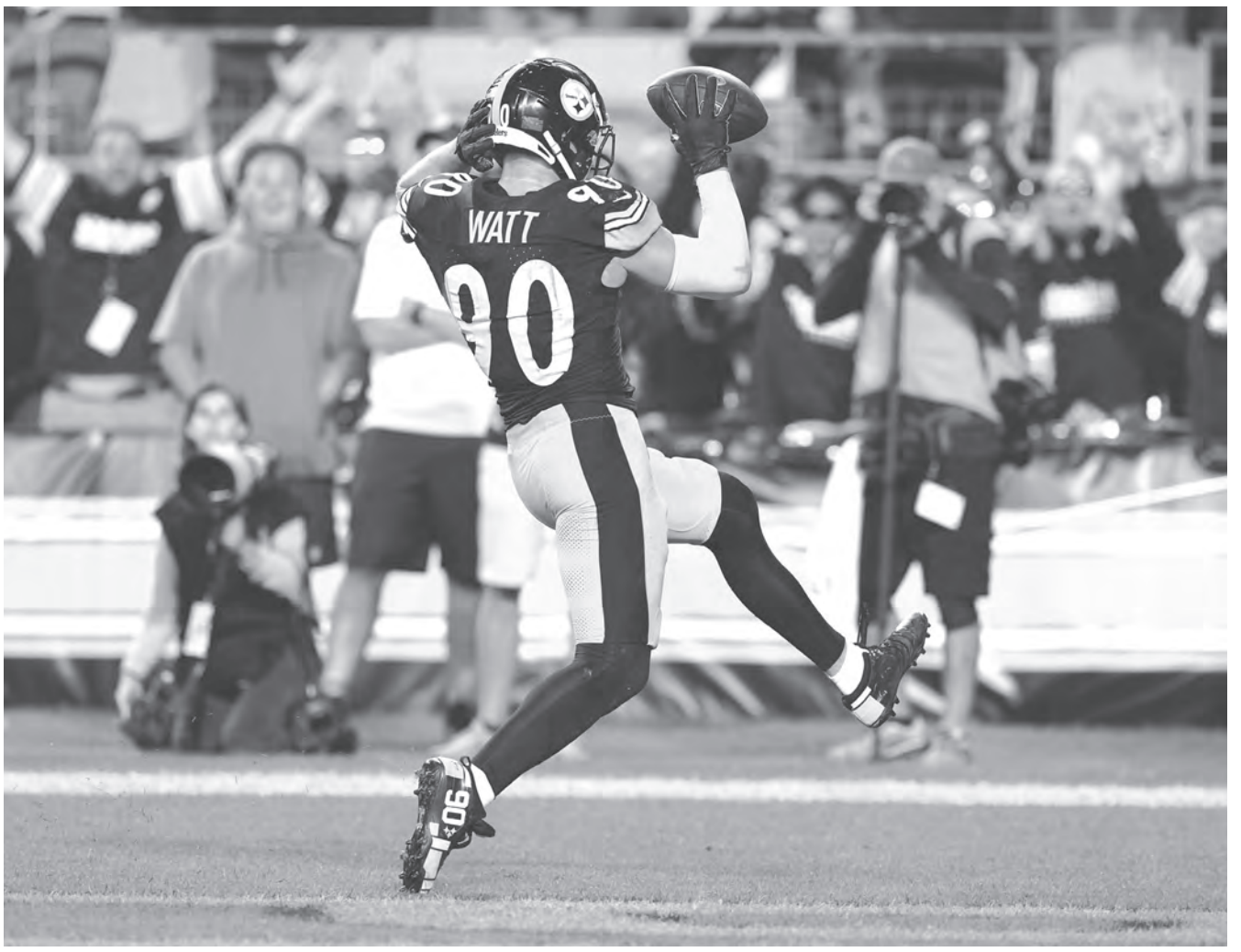
The Steelers (1-1) beat the Browns (1-1) for the 20th straight time at home in the regular season when outside linebacker Alex Highsmith —who returned an interception for a touchdown on the game's first snap —beat Cleveland left tackle Jedrick Wills Jr. off the edge and chopped the ball out of Watson's hands.

Watt picked it up and raced home as Pittsburgh extended its home winning streak on Monday night to 21 straight dating to 1991. Cleveland allowed an opponent to score two defensive touchdowns for the first time since Pittsburgh did it on Oct. 16, 1983.

The Browns played most of the final three quarters without Chubb, who was carted off the field with what appeared to be his second major left knee injury. He suffered a dislocation and three torn ligaments while in college at Georgia.

Chubb took a handoff from Watson early in the second quarter and reached the Pittsburgh 3 when Steelers safety Minkah Fitzpatrick dove at Chubb's legs. The four-time Pro Bowler's left leg bent awkwardly underneath him as he rolled over Fitzpatrick, with his knee being pushed one way while the rest of his body went another.

The injury was so disturbing to watch that a replay was shown just once inside the stadium, and ESPN declined to show replays on its telecast. Players on both teams knelt in prayer while Chubb was tended to by medical personnel.



AP

Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker T.J. Watt celebrates in the end zone after recovering a fumble by Cleveland Browns quarterback Deshaun Watson and returning it for a touchdown during the second half of an NFL football game Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, in Pittsburgh.

Chubb, respected by his teammates because, as former quarterback Jacoby Brissett put it, "he's an All-Pro and acts like he's on the practice squad," was taken off on a cart.

Jerome Ford, Chubb's replacement, ran for 106 yards and caught a 3-yard touchdown pass for the Browns, but Cleveland's miscues cost it a chance to win at Pittsburgh in the regular season for the first time since 2003. The Browns beat the host Steelers in the playoffs after the 2020 season.

Watson completed 22 of 40 for 235 yards with a touchdown and an interception. He was also flagged twice for unsportsmanlike conduct for grabbing the facemask of a Steeler while running. The penalties cut a pair of promising drives short.

The Browns were penalized eight times for 81 yards and turned it over four times, two of which ended with one member of the best edge-rusher tandems in the NFL celebrating in the end zone.

The Steelers avoided their first 0-2 start since 2019 even though their offense continued to sputter. Kenny Pickett connected on 15 of 30 passes for 222 yards, a third of them coming on a 71-yard catch-and-run touchdown by George Pickens in the second quarter that briefly brought the Acrisure Stadium crowd to life.

Cleveland still appeared to be in good position when Ford raced 69 yards to set up a 1-yard dive by Pierre Strong that put the Browns ahead 22-19 midway through the third quarter.

Pittsburgh's offense did next to nothing for most of the second half, leading to chants from the crowd to fire coordinator Matt Canada.

Highsmith's bull rush off the edge and Watt's scoop-and-score bailed the Steelers out.

BILLS 38, RAIDERS 10

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)—The worse Josh Allen feels one week, the better he plays the next.

Following a four-turnover season-opening dud at the New York Jets, a self-motivated Allen let loose with a near-perfect performance in leading the Bills to a 38-10 rout of the Las Vegas Raiders on Sunday.

"I love feeling how I felt last week. I really do, because it makes the good feel that much better," Allen said. "I take the bad with the good, I understand it, and I'm just trying to let it fuel me and use it to my benefit."

Allen threw three touchdown passes in a game he opened by completing his first 13 attempts. Putting aside the over-aggressive tendencies that got him into trouble against the Jets, Allen established a rhythm by focusing on completing mostly short and easy attempts to finish 31 of 37 for 274 yards and no turnovers.

It was Allen's 21st outing with three or more touchdowns passing, and Buffalo improved to 13-4 in games following a loss since 2019.

"Just us getting back to who we feel like we are," Allen said.

Buffalo finished with 183 yards rushing, with Allen accounting for just 7. James Cook led the way with a career-best 123 yards—the most by a Bills running back since LeSean McCoy had 156 in December 2017.

What stood out was Allen playing within his limitations. Center Mitch Morse referred to the outing as stoic and intentional.

"I think it represents his tenacity as a competitor, and also that he understands who he is," Morse said. "It's a beautiful thing. And it was just awesome to see and be a part of this week, especially Josh going out there and finding his mojo."

The Raiders had few answers in a game they opened by scoring on Davante Adams' 16-yard touchdown catch less than three minutes in, and then found themselves trailing 28-10 before their first possession of the third quarter.

Whatever chance Las Vegas had to get back into the game ended four plays from scrimmage later, when linebacker Matt Milano jumped in front of Josh Jacobs to intercept Jimmy Garoppolo's pass at midfield.

"I thought we created some momentum at the beginning of the game. But momentum is just a word," Raiders coach Josh McDaniels said. "We need to play well, and coach well, for 60 minutes. We can't just live off the momentum of a drive. We had five decent plays and then didn't play very well the rest of the game."

The Raiders dropped to 1-1 following an outing in which Garoppolo finished 16 of 24 for 185 yards and was intercepted twice, and Jacobs, the NFL's leading rusher last year, was limited to a career-worst minus-2 yards on nine carries. According to Elias Sports, it marked the first time since the NFL's merger that the league's defending rushing champion finished with negative yardage.

"I don't think we need to totally flush it. I think we need to address where we went wrong, and improve from there," Jacobs said. "That's the thing that makes it so frustrating for me is just the potential. You see flashes of how good we can really be."

Allen completed passes to nine players, with Gabe Davis catching six for 92 yards and a touchdown. Tight end Dawson Knox and Khalil Shakir also caught touchdown passes, while Latavius Murray and Damien Harris scored a touchdown each rushing.

Linebacker Terrel Bernard also had an interception and Taylor Rapp recovered Zamir White's fumble on what became the Raiders' final possession, closing a week in which the Bills faced several off-field distractions.

Coach Sean McDermott had to address his leadership group after team owner Terry Pegula was accused of making racially insensitive comments in a lawsuit filed by a former NFL Media reporter. Pegula denied the allegations.

And then on Wednesday, a Bills media reporter was overheard on an open microphone questioning receiver Stefon Diggs' character. Diggs went to social media a day later, calling the comments "hurtful" and "insulting."

"I think it shows the resiliency of this team. No one liked the taste in the mouth we had this week, I think we brought a certain edge to this week's practice and preparation," Morse said. "It was nothing crazy or confrontational, but just very intentional."

Patriots draw praise for innovative play design on blocked field goal

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—The Patriots may be 0-2, but the day after their 24-17 loss to Miami, coach Bill Belichick and his staff were once again being praised around the NFL for their creativity.

Brenden Schooler blocked a 49-yard field-goal try by the Dolphins' Jason Sanders on Sunday night, executing an innovative and deceptive play design on special teams.

New England's players lined up in standard rush positions on the line of scrimmage with the exception of Schooler, who initially stood about halfway between the sideline and his teammates.

He got a running start and sprinted parallel to the line of scrimmage, helping to time his rush perfectly just as the ball was snapped.

His momentum allowed him to easily get around the Dolphins' edge protector and dive in nearly untouched for a block that teammate Kyle Dugger recovered.

"As soon as the ball was snapped and I felt myself in the momentum, carrying, I just knew I was going to get there and just wanted to make sure I got a hand on the ball or something," Schooler said.

According to the NFL's NextGen Stats, Schooler was running 12.7 miles per hour when the ball was snapped and 13.19 mph when the kick was blocked.

Schooler credited the ingenuity of special teams coordinator Cameron Achord, along with fellow assistants Joe Judge and Joe Houston.

"When they drew it up and told us what we were doing I thought to myself, 'I trust them but I haven't ever seen anything like this before,'" Schooler said.

He said any reservations he had about attempting the unorthodox block were quieted by teammate and special teams captain Matt Slater.

"Going on the field, he said to me, 'You are going to go block this and just trust in what we practiced during the week,'" Schooler recalled.

Defensive tackle Deatrich Wise said the reps Schooler got in practice all week paid off.

"We knew it was going to work, and he did a fantastic job executing it well," Wise said.

Raiders coach and former Patriots assistant Josh McDaniels said he expects other teams to attempt the play.

"If it works, then it tends to be stolen," McDaniels said Monday. "That's what the nature of the profession of coaches is all about."

Wainwright gets 200th win as the Cardinals blank the Brewers, 1-0

ST. LOUIS (AP)—With his final season winding down, Adam Wainwright was stuck on 198 wins for nearly three months.

And then in a span of seven days, he found that old form and reached a major milestone.

Wainwright earned his 200th win, pitching seven innings of four-hit ball in a vintage performance as the St. Louis Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers 1-0 on Monday night.

"For at least a night I was a real pitcher out there, the guy that I want to be," said Wainwright, who plans to retire after the season. "Seven innings, shutout, a couple of hits, got through a couple of tough ABs out there and made adjustments, worked in and out, up and down."

It was the longest outing this season for the 42-year-old Wainwright (5-11), who struck out three and walked two. He has won consecutive starts—both against first-place teams—after going 0-10 with a 10.72 ERA over his previous 11 games between June 24 and Sept. 7.

"That's as good as we've seen," Cardinals manager Oliver Marmol said. "If you talked to him right before the game, and if he's being really honest, he was being held up by duct tape before the game started, and for him to go out there and do what he did is highly impressive."

The right-hander became the 38th pitcher in NL history to reach 200 wins, and the 24th major leaguer to achieve the milestone since 2000.

Wainwright said the feeling was comparable to his emotions while closing out the 2006 World Series as a rookie reliever.

"Tonight, for me, this is tied for first," he said.

Willson Contreras homered off Freddy Peralta (12-9) in the fourth. Milwaukee lost its second straight, and its magic number to clinch the NL Central remained at seven. The Brewers hold a six-game lead over the Chicago Cubs with 12 to play.

Contreras was especially emotional about Wainwright once the game ended.

"I know he's been battling a lot of stuff and he's been pitching the best that he can this year," Contreras said. "And I'm glad that he was able to reach out to reach the 200 mark on wins. And I'm glad that I was back behind the plate for him."

ORIOLES 8, ASTROS 7

HOUSTON (AP)—Cedric Mullins hit a three-run homer in the ninth inning to rally the Baltimore Orioles past the Houston Astros 8-7 on Monday night in a matchup of American League division leaders.

Houston led by two entering the ninth before closer Ryan Pressly (3-5) allowed consecutive singles to Ryan O'Hearn and Austin Hays with one out. Mullins then hit his 15th homer into the seats in right field to put the Orioles on top.

Yordan Alvarez reached second to start the bottom of the ninth on a throwing error by Gold Glove third baseman Ramón Urías. Pinch-runner Jake Meyers advanced when José Abreu lined out to right field, but held at third when Kyle Tucker grounded out to second. Cionel Pérez was replaced by Yennier Cano, who struck out Chas McCormick to get his seventh save.

Baltimore moved 2 1/2 games ahead of second-place Tampa Bay.

Houston has lost three of four but maintained a 1 1/2-game lead in the AL West thanks to a fourth straight loss by Texas on Monday night against Boston.

REDS 7, TWINS 3

CINCINNATI (AP)—Rookie Connor Phillips pitched three-hit ball over seven innings for his first major league win, Will Benson drove in three runs and Cincinnati beat Minnesota in a game with postseason implications for both teams.

Cincinnati (79-73) won for the fifth time in seven games and trails Chicago (78-72) by .0003 for the NL's final wild-card berth, both a half-game behind Arizona (79-72). Miami (78-73) dropped a half-game behind the Reds with a 2-1 loss to the New York Mets,

Minnesota (79-72), nearing its third division title in five years, maintained a seven-game lead over second-place Cleveland in the AL Central with 11 games left.

Phillips (1-0), a 22-year-old right-hander, hadn't gotten past five innings in either of his first two big league starts. He gave up solo homers by Royce Lewis in the fourth and Alex Kirilloff in the seventh. Phillips matched his season high with seven strikeouts and walked one.

PHILLIES 7, BRAVES 1

ATLANTA (AP)—Kyle Schwarber hit a 483-foot, two-run homer, and the Phillies went deep four other times to back Zack Wheeler in a win over Atlanta.

Schwarber's 45th long homer of the season gave the Phillies a six-run lead in the sixth, a drive that cleared the top of the Chop House restaurant in right field at Truist Park. It was the second-farthest ball hit at the home of the Braves and the second-longest homer by Schwarber in his career, 5 feet shy of the ball he hit off Yu Darvish in the NL Championship Series at San Diego last year.

Philadelphia opened a 3 1/2-game lead over Arizona for the top NL wild card.

Atlanta lost its fourth straight but was assured a bye in the Wild Card Series and home-field advantage in the Division Series when Milwaukee lost 1-0 at St. Louis.

Bryce Harper, J.T. Realmuto, Nick Castellanos and Johan Rojas also homered to send the major league-leading Braves to their fourth straight loss.

AP

St. Louis Cardinals starting pitcher Adam Wainwright throws during the second inning of a baseball game against the Milwaukee Brewers Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, in St. Louis.

RED SOX 4, RANGERS 2

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Rob Refsnyder hit a go-ahead two-run single in the eighth inning and Boston snapped a four-game losing streak by beating playoff-chasing Texas, which lost its fourth in a row even after getting two All-Star players back in the lineup.

Boston rallied against reliever Will Smith (2-7), who walked No. 8 batter Luis Urias and then gave up a double that snapped No. 9 batter Connor Wong's 0-for-17 slide. Refsnyder's one-out hit that made it 3-2 came after Rafael Devers, with 10 hits his previous 23 at-bats, was intentionally walked. Adam Duvall followed with a sac fly.

Marcus Semien, the only Rangers player to start all 150 of their games, hit another leadoff homer and had an RBI single.

Texas (82-68), already guaranteed its first winning record since 2016, is tied with Seattle for the American League's third and final wild-card spot. The Rangers play the Mariners seven times in the season's last 10 days.

METS 2, MARLINS 1

MIAMI (AP)—Jeff McNeil hit a tiebreaking homer leading off the ninth inning and New York knocked Miami out of playoff position.

Mark Vientos had an RBI single and José Butto pitched six stingy innings to help the fourth-place Mets play spoiler again with their second consecutive win over a postseason contender. New York also beat the Cincinnati Reds at home on Sunday.

Miami fell a half-game behind the idle Chicago Cubs for the third and final National League wild card. Cincinnati is also a half-game in front of the Marlins after defeating Minnesota on Monday night.

McNeil pulled a slider from closer Tanner Scott (8-5) over the right-field wall for his 10th homer. That snapped a string of seven straight scoreless outings for Scott, who hadn't allowed an earned run in 18 appearances since July 31.

MARINERS 5, ATHLETICS 0

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Mariners rookie Bryan Woo had six strikeouts over five sharp innings in a successful homecoming, and Seattle pulled even for the third AL wild card by beating last-place Oakland.

José Caballero homered for the first time in two months, and J.P. Crawford walked three times and delivered an RBI single to help the Mariners win the opener of their final road trip.

Seattle moved into a tie with skidding Texas for the final American League playoff berth. Both teams are 1 1/2 games behind first-place Houston in the AL West.

Woo (4-4) was born in Oakland and attended high school in nearby Alameda. A sixth-round draft pick in 2021 who made his major league debut June 3, the 23-year-old righty allowed three hits and overcame four walks to win back-to-back starts for the first time this season.

DODGERS 8, TIGERS 3

LOS ANGELES (AP)—J.D. Martinez homered twice off Eduardo Rodriguez and drove in five runs as Los Angeles rolled over Detroit.

Rodriguez (11-9), who used his no-trade rights to nix a deal to the Dodgers on Aug. 1, lasted just three-plus innings. He exited in the fourth with an undisclosed injury during Chris Taylor's at-bat.

Lance Lynn (12-11), acquired by the Dodgers from the Chicago White Sox days before the Rodriguez deal fell through, gave up three runs over five innings as NL West champion Los Angeles moved closer to earning a playoff bye and home-field advantage in the Division Series.

Jake Rogers hit a three-run homer for the Tigers, who dropped to 3-1 on a 10-game West Coast trip.

WHITE SOX 6, NATIONALS 1

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mike Clevinger pitched a six-hitter for his third career complete game, and Chicago beat Washington.

Luis Robert Jr. hit a three-run homer for Chicago, which improved to 5-12 in September. Tim Anderson had four of the team's 15 hits.

Clevinger was working on a shutout before Dominic Smith hit his 10th homer with two out in the ninth inning. Smith walked slowly to first while watching the shot to right-center, and then flipped his bat.

Clevinger (8-8) apparently took exception and exchanged words with Smith, prompting benches to clear in an incident that didn't escalate beyond shouting. Clevinger then struck out Carter Kieboom for the final out.

Washington was eliminated from postseason contention with the loss.

PADRES 11, ROCKIES 9

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Luis Campusano hit a go-ahead three-run home run and Garrett Cooper and Eugy Rosario also connected for San Diego, which beat Colorado to extend its winning streak to a season-best five games.

The high-priced Padres, who have been a massive disappointment this year coming off a stirring run to the NL Championship Series, became the last team in the majors to win four straight games on Sunday when they swept the Oakland Athletics, who have baseball's worst record. The Rockies have the NL's worst record.

San Diego is an extreme longshot to make the postseason, coming into Monday night six games out of the final wild card berth, with four teams ahead of them. The Padres have been below .500 since May 12.

Campusano went down on his right knee as he muscled his seventh homer out of the ballyard for a 5-3 lead with two outs in the third against Ty Blach (3-2). Campusano finished with three hits.

ROYALS 6, GUARDIANS 4

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Drew Waters hit a go-ahead double during a two-out rally in the eighth inning Monday, and Kansas City rallied to beat Cleveland in their series-opening matinee.

The Royals trailed 4-2 when Kyle Isbel drew a leadoff walk against Trevor Stephan. The reliever retired the next two batters before walking MJ Melendez and hitting Nelson Velázquez, loading the bases for Michael Massey, whose own walk off Stephan (6-7) scored a run to get Kansas City within one.

Cleveland brought in Enyel De Los Santos to face Waters, and his double to left gave the Royals the lead. A wild pitch from De Los Santos allowed Massey to score and give Kansas City's bullpen a cushion.

Jackson Kowar (2-0) earned the win with a scoreless inning. James McArthur handled the ninth for his first big league save.

SUFC win two in TakeCare youth soccer start

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the return of soccer season in the CNMI, two Southern United Football Clubs debuted strong with a win each in the start of the TakeCare Youth Soccer League Fall 2023 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Saturday.

In the 14U girls division, SUFC slipped past Kanoa FC, 2-1.

SUFC's Rosie Saralu drew first blood four minutes in, but the game was immediately tied after a knock by Kanoa's Yelynn Ha.

Minutes went by without another goal, then SUFC Selena Atalig delivered the tie-breaking and eventual winning goal in the 13th minute. Kanoa could not find their footing and eventually time expired to hand the win to SUFC.

The other SUFC team in the 12U boys division blanked their opponents, Paire FC, 3-0.

A flurry of back-to-back-to-back goals within the same minute secured SUFC's win as Paire could not get past their goalie.

Ele Mettao first found the back of the net, followed by Napu Pangelinan, then the third goal was made by Alejandro Morales.

In other results, MP United's 17U girls team won a lopsided 10-2 match against Shirley's FC; Kanoa FC's 17U girls team blanked Paire FC, 17-0; the 14U girls of Kanoa FC 2 won over Shirley's FC, 3-1; Latte FC (formerly Tan Holdings FC), defeated Paire FC, 3-0, in the 14U girls division; 14U boys of Kanoa FC and MP United FC ended in a scoreless draw; MP United FC 2's 14U boys slipped past Matansa FC, 3-2; Kanoa FC 2's 14U boys outscored Shirley's FC, 17-0; Matansa overpowered Shirley's FC, 5-0, in the 12U boys division; Latte FC won against Matansa FC, 4-1, in the 17U boys division; and MP United and Kanoa FC ended in a 2-2 draw in the 17U boys division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Southern United Football Club's Rosie Saralu, right, goes up against a Kanoa FC player during the start of the TakeCare Youth Soccer League Fall 2023 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville last Saturday.

SAGA

From page 20

the seasoned hikers faced an oddly familiar challenge: thick island jungle filled with bugs and spiders. Crawling, ducking, and slashing their way through the tall sword grass and avoiding all the little critters seem to be second nature to them, as though they do this every Saturday at 4pm.

Once out of the sword grass, the group finally were able to touch down on solid concrete road. It was all in for the long stretch back to Taga Beach. Passing through Chulu Beach then walking straight through the SeaBee Memorial, it seemed like the road was never-ending! Finally, the beautiful Taga Beach sign was near and the group made their final steps and completed the circumnavigation of Tinian.

The overall journey took two days and approximately 37 miles. Besides the leg cramps and fatigue, the group sustained minimal injuries mainly from the tall sword grass that lacerated the skin with micro cuts. The hikers would like to thank CHC Tinian, especially Pam and her husband for helping to lend their cars for the trek. Much thanks go toward Tinian Ice for loaning bottle gallons that helped the trekkers profoundly on staying hydrated throughout the day. Rota, be warned! You are next!

CAMACHO

From page 20

ment record of 69. He eventually settled for second place overall with a 74 on the second day, as he lost to his teammate, Ethan Brumbaugh, who shot a 66.

Brumbaugh finished first with a total of 140, while Camacho finished with a total of 143 for second place.

The Braves won first place in the tournament with a team round one score of 292 and round two of 299 for a total of 591.

"We won the tournament as a team beating the runner up by 25 strokes. Ottawa is our home course and our own invitational so it's good we defended it and won for the first time in fall season history for the school," said Camacho.

The Braves will return to action on Monday, Oct. 23, at the Sand Creek Intercollegiate for another two-day tourney.

When he moved to the U.S, for college, Camacho played his first two years at a JUCO (junior college), Southwestern Community College, with great success, making it to the national level in his last year there; he placed in the top 100 against the best Division 1 players in the nation.

He transferred out for his junior year to play at a Top 100 ranked private NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics). He's played two tournaments there under scholarship and has found some early success with the OUK Braves.

Camacho, an alumnus of Grace Christian Academy, graduated high school in 2021.

He said he began playing and competing when he was 15 years old and quickly fell in love with the aspect of competition and what he had to gain from it. He played with many golf organizations on Saipan, such as Refaluwasch Golf Association and Marianas Golf Association, and even competed and won his share of tournaments on the island.

Camacho said, "It was a short time coming to push to pursue college golf but it was the right move for me. I moved to the states in the fall of 2021 to begin college and attended Southwestern Community College in Iowa. I made many strides in my game and in my education whilst there, even made it to the Division l National Championship to play against America's best. I learned and grew quite a bit in my first two years as a student athlete, it's shaped my ideology for school, sport, and success today."

He is pursuing a college degree in mechanical engineering and said of OUK that it was one of the few schools that offered him a great scholarship while allowing him to be a part of the engineering program.

"The program here is amazing and I think I'm making real head room for myself in the workforce although it would be nice to play golf for the rest of my life. Until the end of my four years, I plan to continue working on my game and hopefully just hopefully it makes sense to turn pro, if not, I'm glad to be where I am and play competitively for as long as I can before I start my career in engineering," he said.

Camacho then thanked his whole family for their continuous support and belief in his abilities, "as well as the connections and relationships that have been forged in my time here to help shape who I am today."

Baby Geckos remain atop ES cross country qualifier

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The elementary boys and girls cross country team of Saipan International School remain the top runners in the second PSS/NMA All School Cross Country 2023-2024 qualifier last Saturday at the American Memorial Park.

SIS came in first in the boys division with a total of 27 points, followed by San Vicente Elementary School with 39 points; Brilliant Star School had 55; Mount Carmel School had 71; Agape Christian School had 89; Saipan Community School had 93; Grace Christian Academy School with 136; Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School with 161; and Oleai Elementary School with 163.

In the individual standings, SIS' Jeffrey Pangelinan finished first with a time of 06:32.50; second was Grace Christian Academy's Beau Bauer with a time of 06:33.75; and third was San Vicente Elementary School's Byron Cruz at 06:36.83.

SIS also led the girls team standings with a total of 18 points. MCS was second with 61; BSS with 63; GTC with 90; GCA with 114; SCS with 114; SVES with 137; OES with 143; and William S. Reyes Elementary School with 162.

In the individual standings. BSS' Lovell Spaeth finished first with a time of 06:32.75; SIS's Kaylen Taflinger and Windsor Gross came in second and third at 06:41.87 and 07:11.39.

In the middle school division, the Lady Geckos trumped everyone else by a mile with 16 points; second was MCS at 64; GCA was third with 60.

ACS took first place in the middle school boys division with 19 points; SIS was second with 38; and Francisco M. Sablan Middle School was third with 56.

SIS' Addalee Taflinger came in first at 12:53.30; SIS' Aubrey White was second with 14:38.96; and third was MCS' Cassidee Flores with a time of 14:53.50.

SIS' Quido Jambor took first, ACS' Raffy Cai was second, and ACS' Daniely Yang came in third.

The next qualifier is the SIS Gecko 5000 at Banzai Cliff is on Saturday, Sept. 30; the Kagman High School Invitational at ChaCha Ocean View Middle School is on Oct. 7; and the championship is set for Oct. 14 at the Saipan Country Club at Saipan Vegas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Elementary school runners are seen in the second PSS-NMA All Schools Cross Country qualifier at the American Memorial Park last Saturday.

MARPAC

From page 20

most impossible passes that had CPA rooted and unable to properly defend. But CPA had a tank by the name of Zack Diaz who, by his sheer size, easily blocked and smacked the ball out of MarPac's shooters.

MarPac put up better percentages though as they made most of their attempts, while CPA would constantly shoot but miss on accord of MarPac's defensive pressure.

Sablan ended up with 23 points, while Santos was a point behind with 22. For CPA, their sharp shooter who tried to carry the team was Donovan Brennan with 25 points.

In the other game that night, Joeten routed the Feds, 81-58.

Games are every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday at 5:30pm and 7pm; and Saturday at 2:30pm, 4pm, and 5:30pm—all at the Ada Gym.

The teams in the league are the Public School System, Docomo Pacific, Marpac, CUC, Priority Care, Office of the Governor, Feds, CPA, CHCC, and Joeten.

Entrance fee for general admission is $2, while VIP is $5.

In the opening ceremony remarks of Sablan before the first game, he thanked R&J Wine and Liquor for their sponsorship as well as MarPac and NMIBF. He then thanked the players. "This is what this facility is put together for and what it's all about. We want to thank the Office of the Governor, the mayor, the members of Legislature, who continue to support this facility, restoring it to its current condition."

Lee, for his remarks, thanked Apatang, mayor Camacho, and members of the lLgislature in attendance, and the participating teams.

"We haven't had one of these for, I would say eight years. It's been a while. Last time we had one here, the gym did not look like this… there's definitely a lot of sports activity going on. This league is for us—for our businesses and government for all your hard work. So, at least this allows us to have a little fun through basketball."

NMBIF's Mike Mercado said of the people in attendance and of the sponsor, R&J Wine and Liquor, "Your partnership is invaluable to us. We must express our heartfelt gratitude to our major sponsor, R&J Wine and Liquor—your generosity has been instrumental in making this dream a reality."

MarPac 81 – Sablan 23, Santos 22, Castro 22, Mettao 12, Riungel 2.

CPA 68 – Brennan 25, David Camacho 19, Mancao 8, Diaz 8, Hambros 3, Cepeda 2, Hofscneider 2, D. Camacho 1.

Scoring by quarters: 17-9, 44-27, 61-45, 81-68.

Watt's scoop-and-score lifts Steelers past Browns, 26-22.

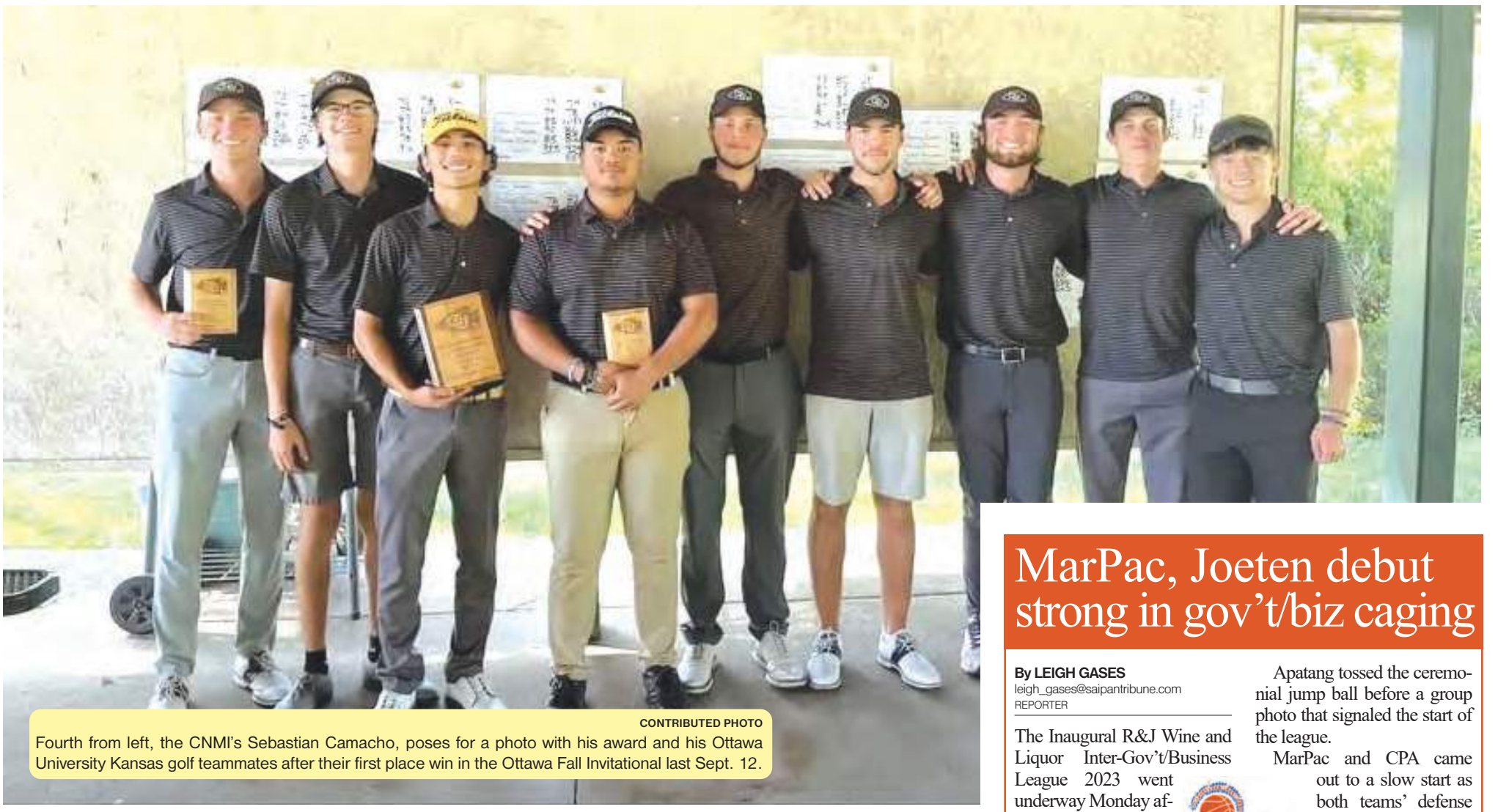
PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune
Sports

SUFC win two in TakeCare youth soccer start.

PAGE 19

Camacho helps lead golf team to 1st fall season win



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fourth from left, the CNMI's Sebastian Camacho, poses for a photo with his award and his Ottawa University Kansas golf teammates after their first place win in the Ottawa Fall Invitational last Sept. 12.

CNMI son and golfer Sebastian Camacho is dominating the U.S. college golf scene as a student-athlete at the Ottawa University Kansas.

His most recent conquest was helping the OUK Braves men's golf team to their first ever fall season win in school history.

The 20-year-old led his golf team on the first day of the Ottawa Fall Invitational last Sept. 11 with a personal tourna-

See CAMACHO on Page 19

The saga continues: Circumnavigate Tinian

By JENNIFER BRIGHT
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Walk around Saipan? Check! So, Tinian was next on the bucket list.

Ali Nelson, Madge Gai, and Christopher King set off on their new expedition on the neighboring island of Tinian this past rainy weekend. A cult following seemed to appear out of thin air as word got out around the community of this Tinian trek. Laura Webb, Denise Myers, Maria Ornes, and Angie Mister joined along with veteran walker Veronica Arriola, who completed the trek with the original trio on the western side of Saipan in May of this year.

The whole month of August was set aside for planning and logistical purposes. Spearheaded by Nelson, duties and responsibilities were distributed amongst the team members as they prepared provisions and camping equipment for the adventure. Routes were planned out and supplies were gathered as Sept. 8 neared. Last-minute details were discussed and camel packs were filled with water and electrolytes. It was now time to head over to the Saipan domestic airport and take a small island hopper plane to the island of Tinian. Fifteen minutes later, the group touched down on Tinian and thus began their two-day odyssey.

The walk began at the southernmost tip of Tinian heading north towards San Jose Village. It was mainly a flat road walk, which was an easy start to the trek. The team transitioned over to the Piña Ridge Road and headed north along the east coast of Tinian. Nelson commented that "the terrain was overall very flat. The weather was stormy, but the cloud cover and rain saved us from getting too hot."

Throughout the evening, heavy rain and thunderstorms raged overhead as the group traversed on with the hope of reaching camp at Long Beach before the weather got worse. Once they reached Long Beach around midnight, the group quickly set up camp and ended their night watching the night sky illuminate with spontaneous lightning and thunderous claps following closely behind. Myers remarked that "for camping it was epically comical how bad the weather was but for hiking it was epically perfection."

Around 4:30am alarm clocks blared and woke the team up from their restless slumber. Gathering up their supplies and eating a light breakfast of fruit and granola bars, the group started their long walk. As they neared the most northern tip of Tinian,

See SAGA on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The intrepid crew of Ali Nelson, Madge Gai, Christopher King, Laura Webb, Denise Myers, Maria Ornes, Angie Mister, and Veronica Arriola celebrate at Taga Beach after successfully circumnavigating Tinian on foot earlier this month.

MarPac, Joeten debut strong in gov't/biz caging

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Inaugural R&J Wine and Liquor Inter-Gov't/Business League 2023 went underway Monday afternoon with a parade of teams and games at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

About 30 minutes after the opening ceremony attended by dignitaries including Lt. David M. Apatang, Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho, Rep. Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan), Rep. Julie A. Ogo (Ind-Saipan), Sen. Dennis C. Mendiola (R-Rota), Alex Sablan representing the Northern Marianas Sports Association and Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation president James Lee and NMIBF members, the league opened with the first game between MarPac and the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Apatang tossed the ceremonial jump ball before a group photo that signaled the start of the league.

MarPac and CPA came out to a slow start as both teams' defense were impenetrable. Free throws by CPA started things off and that was when MarPac found their groove. With both teams rough and tumble, fouls, free throws, steals, and rejections was the name of the game.

The lightning-fast trio of Greg Sablan, Jeff Castro, and Coby Santos led MarPac with their fastbreak plays at the net and within the paint. The long ball was also Sablan and Castro's specialty as they each had three from 3-point territory.

Throughout the game, it was clear that MarPac's chemistry was more well synced than CPA's as they made al-

See MARPAC on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Lt. David M. Apatang, center, tosses the jump ball to Priority Care's Bryce Maratita, left, and CHCC's Derek Manglona, right, during the opening ceremony of the Inaugural R&J Wine and Liquor Inter Gov't/Business League 2023 last Monday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.